

The Bookman

"I am a Bookman."—James Russell Lowell.

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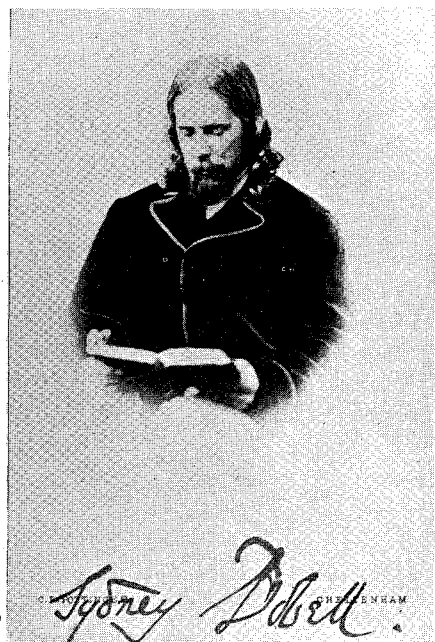
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SYDNEY DOBELL—THE POET OF THE COTSWOLDS.

By S. M. ELLIS.

SYDNEY THOMPSON DOBELL is the pre-eminent poet of Gloucestershire, or more particularly of that beautiful district of the Cotswold



Sydney Dobell
about 1870.

From a photograph given to Miss Violet Hunt.

Hills rising from the Vale of Gloucester to Cleeve Hill, Leckhampton, and Birdlip above Cheltenham, and so to Amberley and Nailsworth, and finally to Painswick, where the mortal part of the poet rests. Dobell's intense love for the county of his adoption (for he was born at Cranbrook, in Kent, on April 5th, 1824) was an essential factor of his

inner or spiritual self, colouring the best of his literary expression. And no poet was ever more responsive to the influences of scenery and Nature. As he once wrote, in view of that verdant portion of the Cotswolds guarding his best-loved home, Coxhorne House, at Charlton Kings:

"Sitting here at my little study window, the hills above, the orchards beneath, the rich, sweet valley spread out in—shall I say intolerable?—loveliness, Nature is before me like an effable Temple."

He had what he called "a country soul." Large towns distracted and bewildered him; in London, he said, "I could not hear myself think." His lifelong love for rural things he expressed with his characteristic poetical melancholy in "Balder":

"... The very stones
Of old memorial have been dear to me,
Sitting long days on ancient stiles worm-worn,
And gazing through green trees o'er grassy graves
Upon the living village and the dead ...
Or on the leafy and live-long repose
Of country labour, and the unhasted life
That plods with equal step the wonted way,
A-field at morn and homeward slow at eve ...
Or on lone homesteads and the untrespassed rest
Of immemorial pastures ...
And all the dewy leisure of the meads."

The fortunate chance which brought Sydney Dobell to Gloucestershire occurred in 1835, when the boy was eleven years old. His father, John Dobell, a wine merchant, finding his business in London not very successful, decided to remove to Cheltenham, at that date a rapidly growing town and at the zenith of its prosperity. The saline springs had become famous about 1740, and the visit of George the Third in 1788 established Cheltenham as a rival spa to Bath, though only two years previously the little river Chelt had flowed openly along the middle of the present High Street. The fine new spa of Pittville was opened in 1830,* five years before the Dobells came to Cheltenham. At first the family lived in a large old house, once an inn, at the extreme end of the High Street (where it becomes the Tewkesbury Road), and which is still the head-quarters of John Dobell & Co., wine merchants. Here was born, I believe, the poet's younger brother, Clarence Dobell, who later achieved some distinction as an artist and also as a friend of Miss Mulock, for he was instrumental in introducing that author to Tewkesbury and other Gloucestershire scenes which are described in "John Halifax, Gentleman." One of the sisters, Mary Alice Dobell, married Briton Riviere, R.A., in 1867. With an increasing family John Dobell found it desirable to live more in the

* The Cheltenham Waters are not very pleasant in taste, and it will be remembered they "astonished the stomach" of the hard-drinking Jorrocks. It was no doubt the poet of a jealous rival commodity who invented the famous "epitaph":

"Here lie I and my two daughters,
Died of drinking the Cheltenham Waters;
If we had stuck to Epsom Salts,
We shouldn't be lying in these here vaults."

An excellent picture of life in Cheltenham in the Thirties will be found in "My Life and Recollections," by Grantley Berkeley.

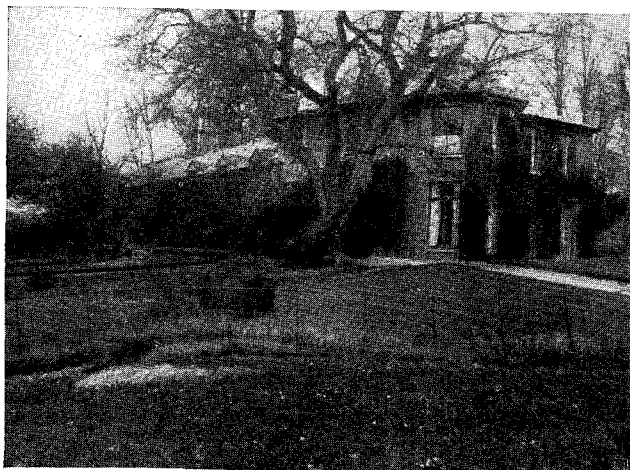


Photo by Mr. Leonard Mott.

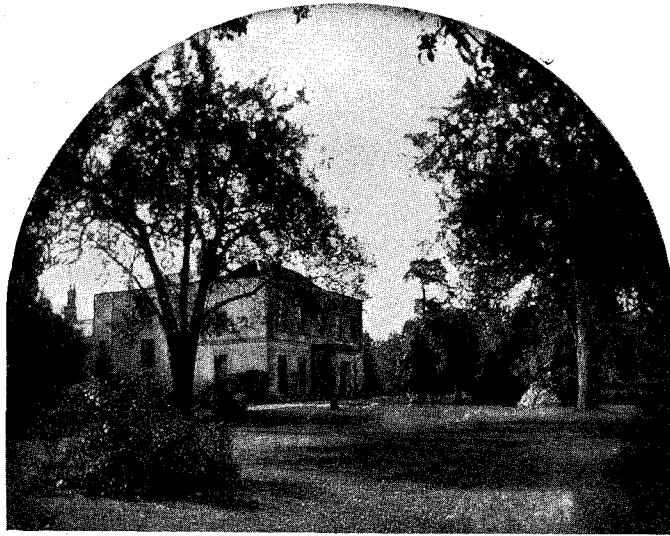
"Detmore," Charlton Kings, Cheltenham.

The early home of Sydney Dobell, and the "Longfield" of Miss Mulock's "John Halifax, Gentleman."

country and away from his place of business. One of the early homes of Sydney Dobell consequently was Battle Down House, on the high ground east of Cheltenham, commanding a glorious view across the great vale to the Malvern Hills.

The Dobells' social position in Cheltenham was rather isolated and self-centred owing to the peculiar religious views inculcated by the wife and mother, who carried on the tenets and practices of the "Church" founded in 1799 by her father, Samuel Thompson (1766-1837), a man of great ability and a leader of political reform in the City of London. The basic principles of his sect of Free-Thinking Christians were those of the Primitive Christians, who sought to follow the simple life of Christ, with the addition of disbelief in the doctrine of the Trinity. As time went on schism and secession rent Thompson's "Church of God," and eventually caused its extinction. Some of his followers elaborated theories he had not advocated, and in particular his daughter and son-in-law, John Dobell, adopted the old Judaic idea of a peculiar and superior people, favoured by God, whereby their community was separate from the world, and that intercourse with other people not so consecrated was to be avoided as far as possible. Consequently the ten children of John Dobell were not sent to any school but received their education at home. In the case of Sydney it was mainly on lines of reading laid down by himself.

It had originally been the intention of Sydney Dobell's parents to train him to be the apostolic successor of his grandfather Thompson, to be the new evangelist of the Free-Thinking Christians. Thus the records of his over-stimulated childhood make pathetic reading. At three years of age he was described as possessing a "very astonishing understanding," with "literary powers extensive," and "preferring mental diversion to eating and drinking." At seven years of age, when living at Islington, he wrote little notebooks wherein he dissertated on the meaning of Trinitarian, the quantity of calcareous earth in marble, and similar problems not usually of interest to infants. At nine years of age the father relates that "Sydney reads all Miss Martineau's books on Political Economy, and devours any other book I



**Coxhorne House,
Charlton Kings, Cheltenham.**

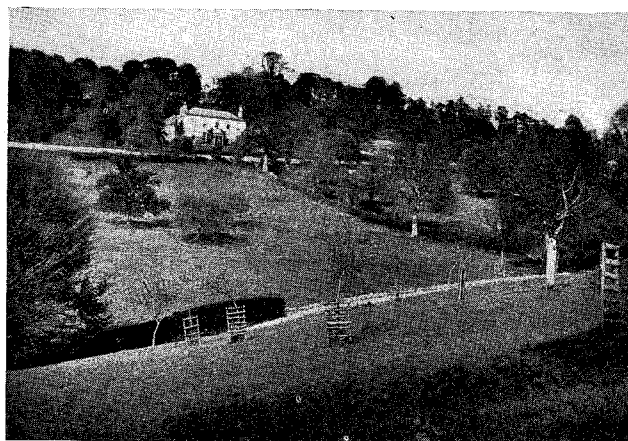
The home of Sydney Dobell, 1848-1853, and where he wrote the first part of "Balder."

from his parents' creed into a wider, far-embracing Christianity. His was a brave and generous nature, tender yet often vehement. He was hospitable, and possessed a keen sense of humour, though the latter quality is not often visible in his poetry. But the disastrous effects of his precocity were never eradicated from his physical system. For he was precocious in all things. At the age of twelve he was in his father's counting-house daily from ten till four, and conducting a great part of the personal side of the business; the rest of the day he was studying Greek, Latin, and French, reading of course also every variety of English literature. Two years later he had begun to write poetry, some of which was published in the Cheltenham papers. A drama called "Napoleon" was submitted to Campbell, the poet, who pronounced a favourable opinion; when in Cheltenham a few years later Campbell called to see the youthful Sydney Dobell several times.

When only ten years of age Sydney Dobell fell precociously in love with a little girl named Emily Fordham* (he became engaged to her when he was fifteen, and they were married when he was twenty). All these abnormal excitements and continuous brain-work caused another serious illness. It was typhus, and he emerged from the fever a "gentle, quiet, wasted creature . . . so tall, so thin, so old-looking," though

he was but fourteen. From the age of sixteen to twenty he was in a continuous state of unrest. His father thought his love-affair too much for his nerves. Sydney Dobell in later years attributed the breakdown of both his own and his wife's health to "an excessive practice of prayer" during this period, 1840-1844. Both he

* Her father, George Fordham, of Sandon Bury Manor House, Cambridgeshire, had been a member of Mr. Thompson's Church of Free-Thinking Christians. He was a friend of Cobbett and Godwin.



**Barton End House,
Nailsworth.**

The last home of Sydney Dobell, and where he died in 1874.

and Miss Fordham were obsessed with their religious beliefs; as Mrs. Dobell stated in after years: "The more we loved, the more we prayed."

However, amid all this mental turmoil there were many happy days—visits to Miss Fordham's home in Cambridgeshire, riding, and all the delights of Detmore, the charming little house at Charlton Kings where the Dobells lodged, and which became the permanent home of the family in 1846. Miss Mulock has faithfully pictured Detmore for all time as "Longfield" in "John Halifax, Gentleman"—the low, quaint house on the rise of a richly-wooded meadow, with the little river Chelt running through a thicket below, and all around exquisite glimpses of the Cotswold Hills. Sydney Dobell loved Detmore, and his thoughts ever turned to the spot when he was absent from England. "Send me," he would write, "close accounts of the progress of spring in the dear remembered fields . . . send me word when the very first snow-drop comes up in the garden." Often he recalled Detmore in his poems. Thus in "Home, Wounded":

"Wheel me down to the meadow,
Down to the little river,
In sun or in shadow
I shall not dazzle or shiver,
I shall be happy anywhere.
Must I choose? Then anchor me there
Beyond the beckoning poplars, where
The larch is snooding her flowery hair
With wreaths of morning shadow.
Among the thicket hazels of the break
Perchance some nightingale doth shake
His feathers, and the air is full of song;
In those old days when I was young and strong,
He used to sing on yonder garden tree,
Beside the nursery."

And in the lovely "Even-Song":

"Where in the twilight, in the coloured twilight,
I sit beside the thorn upon the hill.
The mavis sings upon the old oak tree
Sweet and strong,
Strong and sweet,
Soft, sweet, and strong . . .
And sounds of lowing kine,
And echoes long and clear,
And herdsman's evening call,
And bells of penning folds,
Sweet and low."

Sydney Dobell and Emily Fordham were married on July 18th, 1844, and their union was an ideally happy one despite the chronic ill-health of both parties through all its thirty years. During that long period husband and wife were never separated for a day and a night. The glamour of their early-found romance never faded, and here may be traced the source of Sydney Dobell's inspiration as the singer of the rapture of young love, a phase of his poetry which challenges Meredith—the Meredith of "Love in the Valley" and "Oh! Briar Scents." It is Dobell's theme again and again. In "Love":

"Smile on him again, and turn
With him thro' the sweet-briar glade,
With him thro' the woodbine shade;
In the sweet-briar wilderness,
To his side, ah! closer creep,
In the honeysuckle walk
Let him make thee blush and weep . . .
And shy airs with soft caresses
Letting down thy golden tresses,
Marry those dear locks with his . . .
Kiss and redden into roses.
Oh, you Lovers warm and living!
Love on, plight on, we cannot hear or see.
Oh beautiful and young and happy! Ye
Have the rich earth's inheritance."

And pre-eminently in "The Song of the Milk-maid," waiting for her Cotswold lad, is heard the full melody of the joyous abandon of young love:

" . . . He's crossed the hill,
I can see him down by the stile,

He's passed the hay, he's coming this way,
He's coming to me, my Harry!
My Harry! my lad! my lover!
Set the sun and fall the dew,
Heigho, merry world, what's to do
That you're smiling over and over?
Up on the hill and down in the dale,
And along the tree-tops over the vale . . .
Oh, world, have you ever a lover?
You were so dull and cold just now,
I could not see a leaf on the tree,
And now I could count them, one, two, three,
Count them over and over,
Leaf from leaf like lips apart,
Like lips apart for a lover.
And the hill-side beats with my beating heart,
And the apple-tree blushes all over,
And the May-bough touched me and made me start
And the wind breathes warm like a lover . . .
Harry is near, Harry is near,
My heart's as sick as if he were here,



Sydney Dobell.

From an early portrait in the possession of his niece, Miss Lilian Mott.

My lips are burning, my cheeks are wet,
 He hasn't uttered a word as yet,
 But the air's astir with his praises . . .
 Oh, Harry! oh, Harry! my love, my pride,
 My heart is leaping, my arms are wide!
 Roll up, roll up, you dull hill-side,
 Roll up, and bring my Harry!
 They may talk of glory over the sea,
 But Harry's alive, and Harry's for me,
 My Love, my lad, my Harry!"

Such emotional intensity commands the spring of tears.

After their marriage Sydney Dobell and his wife went to live in a small house in Jersey Place, Cheltenham. They later removed to Welling Hill, a farm near Detmore, and it was here in January, 1847, that Dobell was struck down by a nearly fatal attack of rheumatic fever, from the effects of which he never entirely recovered. His period of convalescence was spent at Birdlip amid the beech woods, and he ever later associated the beauty of this spot in May, as he beheld it after leaving his fever-phantom haunted sick-room, as symbolical of his return from death to quick-springing life. For Sydney Dobell held Life and all its beauty and joy very dear; he was, though often melancholy in his literary expression—the melancholy that is inspired by autumn and decay—never one of the Churchyard School of Poets who profess to long for the eternal rest of the grave. The Joy of Life was as important to him as the Duty of Life.

In 1848 the Dobells took up their residence at "Lark Hay," a house on the old Roman Road at Hucclecote, in order to be near Gloucester, where Sydney was to manage a branch of his father's business. At Lark Hay he wrote "The Roman" in his study looking over fields and rich orchards to his loved Cotswolds. The volume was published by Bentley in April, 1850. Although the author appeared under the pseudonym of "Sydney Yendys," the identity of the new poet soon became known, and Sydney Dobell was famous at the age of twenty-six. "The Roman" voiced the cause of Italy's struggle for freedom, the same theme which a few years later inspired Swinburne and Meredith. Mazzini wrote to Sydney Dobell:

"You have written about Rome as I would, had I been born a poet. And what you did write flows from the soul, the all-loving, the all-embracing, the prophet-soul. I shall feel happy whenever circumstances will enable me to shake hands with you."

The poet and the patriot duly met, and Sydney Dobell soon numbered among his friends and acquaintances Carlyle, Tennyson, Browning, Ruskin, Holman Hunt, Westland Marston, Alexander Smith and John Stuart Blackie. This date, 1851, marks Sydney Dobell's crossing the Rubicon from a life of almost cloistered religion and prayer to the publicity and honours of an acclaimed poet and a thinker whose opinions counted in the great arena of the world's affairs. As he wrote to his sister, he looked back to his former life "with a kind of self-reverence—as to an impossible saintdom, to which I would not return, but which I can never equal on this side death. I see that I have a wider mission and a rougher excellence before me." How seriously he regarded his new responsibilities as poet and prophet can be read in his letters to Charlotte Brontë, whose acquaintance he made owing to his long review of the Brontë novels in *The Palladium*, September,

1850, wherein he expressed the curious belief that "Currer Bell" was the one and same author of "Wuthering Heights," "The Tenant of Wildfell Hall," and "Jane Eyre," the books being written in the sequence given. Dobell was not at his best in review work. The vast stores of learning and immense vocabulary of words he had acquired in his precocious youth here found full vent, with the result that his thesis often became obscured by the verbosity of his style and his discursive reflections. Always he desired the power to sway the minds of other men.

A visit to Switzerland in 1851 suggested some of the scenes of his next great poetical work, "Balder," an epic designed to analyse and exhibit the egotism of the intellect in the person of a poet, naturally good, but overcome by circumstances and the strife of sorrow. Such a subject is not likely to have a popular appeal, but to avoid "Balder" is to miss some of Dobell's most beautiful imagery and pictures of Nature. The early part was written at Coxhorne House, Charlton Kings, where, he said, "Every breath of inspiration is of Charlton air." In inviting Charlotte Brontë to Coxhorne he wrote: "I cannot tell you how lovely a place we live in. This garden rookery, with its dreamy music . . . and all around our house this quiet green valley, shut in everywhere by orchard hills." Coxhorne was Sydney Dobell's home from 1848 to 1853, and when he was obliged to leave finally he kissed its outer gate farewell with tears in his eyes.

During the next eighteen years he and his wife were wanderers, ever seeking new climates and expert medical advice for the benefit of their mutual health. "Balder" was finished on the high land of Amberley—I think probably at Rose Cottage, where Miss Mulock also stayed at this time (1853). By the time "Balder" was published at the close of the year, Dobell and his wife had arrived in Scotland, where they remained for nearly four years. The poet regarded it as a time of exile, though he valued and enjoyed the cultured society of notable people resident in Edinburgh. In an Edinburgh paper of 1854 first appeared Sydney Dobell's best-known poem, the famous "Keith of Ravelston," his brilliant essay in balladry which has been reprinted again and again in anthologies, and under the title of "A Nuptial Eve" in Dobell's *Collected Works*.

"The murmur of the mourning ghost
 That keeps the shadowy kine,
 'Oh, Keith of Ravelston,
 The sorrows of thy line!'"

The strange allure of those sad, melodious, haunted cadences! No wonder that their author related:

"I am receiving praises of 'Ravelston' from all quarters, and from critics of all sorts and sizes. Their enthusiasm amuses me, because it is sometimes warmest in those in whom 'Balder' awoke but little regard. Now I could, I believe, engage to supply 'Ravelstons' on easy terms by the dozen, while 'Balder' was the highest effort of my poetic faculties."

Sydney Dobell was affected intensely by the Crimean War. In spite of his early training he had always been keenly interested in military matters, and in later life he more often advocated the sword rather than arbitration in international quarrels. "Fight! you mad, magnificent, foolish nation," he advised Italy when humiliated by France in 1867. His interest in the

Crimean War found expression in a series of ballads intended, as he said, "to catch the various home-reflections of that blazing affair in the East." Published in 1856, "England in Time of War" contains Dobell's best work. It was his last book, for during the remaining years of his life he only wrote a few stray poems and prose papers. His intellect was as brilliant as ever, but some strange mental languor debarred him from concentrated composition and the physical labour of writing. His literary career thus comprised only about eight years.

Sydney Dobell and his wife returned to Detmore in 1857 for the spring, passing on to Wales before spending the winter at St. Catherine's House, Niton, in the Isle of Wight. In 1858-1860 they were back in the loved Cotswolds, living in a romantic little house called Cleeve Tower, renamed Balder Tower by Blackie, who with his wife visited his friends here. In 1861 the Dobells stayed on Leckhampton Hill; at the old inn at Birdlip; and then at a house on Crickley Hill, which commands from its woodland height a wonderful view of the Vale of Gloucester and away to the hills of the Forest of Dean and Wales. Sydney Dobell said he had seen nothing in France or Italy "so beautiful as the road between Birdlip and Crickley." He visited France, Spain and Italy in the winters of 1862-1865. The house on Crickley Hill was given up in 1864, after another attack of rheumatic fever which prostrated the poet. In the following summer he took Noke Place on Chosen Hill, near Gloucester, in a charming situation of orchards and meadows. The Dobells revisited Scotland, and some time was spent at Clifton and in a



Emily Fordham,
Wife of Sydney Dobell.

From an early portrait in the possession of the Misses Mott.

house on Hampton Common above Stroud. In 1869, on Hampton Common, he met with a serious riding accident, his horse falling on him, and the injuries, combined with the effects of a heavy fall he suffered in Italy a few years previously, hastened his end.

Sydney Dobell's last home in the Cotswolds was Barton End House, near Nailsworth, on a hill-side and possessing beautiful grounds. Here, as he said, he had a fitting "home to live and to die in, this lovely home." He came in August, 1871, and was only fated to be there for three years. His mysterious illness advanced a stage and caused extreme weakness, though at first he was able to enjoy the society of friends who visited him. As of old, he loved children; Miss Violet Hunt recalls how

as a little girl she stayed with Mr. and Mrs. Dobell at Barton End House, and how kind the poet was to her, though he was then a dying man. He preserved his interest in his horses and dogs, and in every topic of the day, though unable to read himself in his last weeks. He would lie by the window gazing on the beech woods and the hills he had loved so long. The end came on August 22nd, 1874, when "as his favourite rooks, winging home, were crossing the sky in front of his windows, his last breath was quickly drawn. Rest came to him. The last sunshine of a gorgeous August evening lay rich and deep upon the scene he loved so dearly. The arms of his wife were round him, his hand was held by his mother."

A beautiful and enviable passing: and yet not so, for how doubly hard to die in full summer-tide on Cotswold.

MR. GUEDALLA PRESENTS LORD PALMERSTON.*

BY GEORGE SAMPSON.

THE lot of Mr. Philip Guedalla is hard. He is really to be pitied, even though some may think he is to be envied. He suffers from a superfluity of gifts, and unfortunately he can shed none of them. Thus he was born to be an historian; but he was also born to be a wit. "An insular country subject to fogs, and with a powerful middle class, requires grave statesmen." So said the only Prime Minister of this land who ever wrote an epic poem. Mr. Guedalla should consider that precedent. It has taken over a century to convince the Opposition that a statesman with wit and imagination was not

necessarily a cheap jack or a pickpocket or both. And some are unconvinced even unto this day.

The country that requires grave statesmen also requires grave historians. Gibbon has not yet lived down a suspicion of levity, and Macaulay is rebuked for readability by almost every undergraduate engaged in what is called "research." Mr. Guedalla, being an historian, is capable of mole-like industry in the dust; but, being a wit, he is incapable of admitting to labour. His historical brow pours with honest sweat, but he flings his achievements at you elegantly as an airy impromptu. Being an historian, he has a plain tale to tell; being a wit, he cannot tell it plainly. Do you

* "Palmerston." By Philip Guedalla. 25s. net. (Ernest Benn.)

think Mr. Guedalla can say that Palmerston went to Harrow? You are wrong: he cannot. The boy has to fetch a compass round about the mountains of Switzerland and the lofty ministrations of an Italian refugee before he can ascend the celebrated eminence of Middlesex. Do you think Mr. Guedalla can say that young Palmerston met so-and-so? You are wrong; he cannot. He must mention casually a "red-haired youth" or a "blue-eyed boy"; and you never reflect, perhaps, that each light epithet has cost him some well-concealed trouble.

This incessant rain of allusions gives one the impression of having eloped with Mrs. Mountstuart Jenkinson. The allurements of simple virtue become, by comparison, positively seductive. "Oh, for a life without epithets" we exclaim! A passage like the following, for instance, reads as if it were parody of Macaulay:

"So the new Secretary at War signed his first official letter: it dealt, without undue originality, with the topic of regimental accounts. On the next day he exercised his powers to commit a guardsman's demented wife to Bedlam, attending a week later to perform the same sad office for a private of the Line. . . . He signed Militia circulars and explored the mysterious recesses of the Compassionate List; he was prolific with minutes upon the homely affairs of innkeepers and billets; and his pen grew strangely familiar with absorbing problems of pay and allowances, occasionally troubling the General commanding the forces in Portugal with details of that meticulous class, which is the delight of Departments and the despair of soldiers in the field."

That is Mr. Guedalla in his least happy vein—least happy because he is saying unimportant things importantly. When he deals with things that matter the strain is less perceptible. Let me quote another passage, of graver purpose. Waterloo is over; the fallen Emperor is on his way to St. Helena; and France is full of English visitors:

"Lord Palmerston dined at Malmaison and saw the Emperor's round-backed chair at the end of the deep, pillared library; whilst a few miles away Alexander, flushed with moral purpose, elevated in an impulsive hand the strange torch of the Holy Alliance, announcing with richly scriptural allusions the approaching union of the human race in a single family with Russia, Austria and Prussia for elder brothers, and the Prince Regent as a likely relative. The sudden act promoted Christianity into foreign policy; and for a splendid moment Holy Writ seemed almost to acquire the validity of a treaty. As her imperial acolyte murmured this singular incantation over the *status quo*, Madame de Krüdener clasped delighted hands; M. de Metternich tried hard to be respectful and hoped that what looked like religion might only be philanthropy; and Lord Castlereagh, with greater candour, wrote a little grimly that "the Emperor's mind is not

completely sound." Lord Palmerston, unconcerned with these high matters, strolled round picture galleries and buhl shops, until the War Department claimed him. . . . South of the Line a ship sailed on through sunny weather, until in the falling light of an October day a black island stood up out of a leaden sea."

Now it may appear that I have been depicting Mr. Guedalla as a trivial person, not to be taken seriously. But if he were trivial he would not be worth depicting at all. Essentially he is serious, industrious and scrupulous. It is to deliver knowledge, not to conceal ignorance, that he rises to heights of levity. He flies upside down, not because he is clumsy, but because he is skilful. If I seem to shake a reproving finger at him it is because I know that punishment is often useful to the good, and never to the bad. Someone will have to tell him, and it might as well be I, that his resolute obliquity of speech and his considered flourishes of wit, though not tiresome, are tiring. He must conquer his determination never to give his airy somethings a local habitation and a name. Above all, he must remember that even worse than Comic History is Facetious History.

But now it is time for eulogy; so let us say without reserve that Mr. Guedalla has written the best political biography of our day. Nothing but extraordinary literary and historical competence could have compressed the teeming story of nearly a century into a fascinating volume of less than five hundred pages. Palmerston was Secretary at War when we were fighting Napoleon, and he died as Prime Minister in the year King George V was born. No other figure of this magnitude carried so perceptibly the graces of the eighteenth century into the grime of the nineteenth; and no other writer has set the satin and the broadcloth into such telling relation. Palmerston bridges the gap of history that lies between Bonaparte and Bismarck. Over all that space Mr. Guedalla ranges with ease and certainty. His book is as heavily buttressed with original documents as the dullest treatise of the dullest professor; but he gives us results, not processes. His survey has the justness of a map, and in its best moments his style has a living picturesqueness oddly reminiscent of "The Dynasts." Europe is on the march through his pages, with England represented, not by the helmet and trident of Britannia, but by the gallant beaver and glowing cigar of a noble sportsman and gentleman, who spoke for Englishmen in tones that won approval from cottage and castle alike. He should be living at this hour.

Congratulations, Mr. Guedalla; but again let me whisper, See to it that Clio does not make a runaway match with Mr. Brummell.

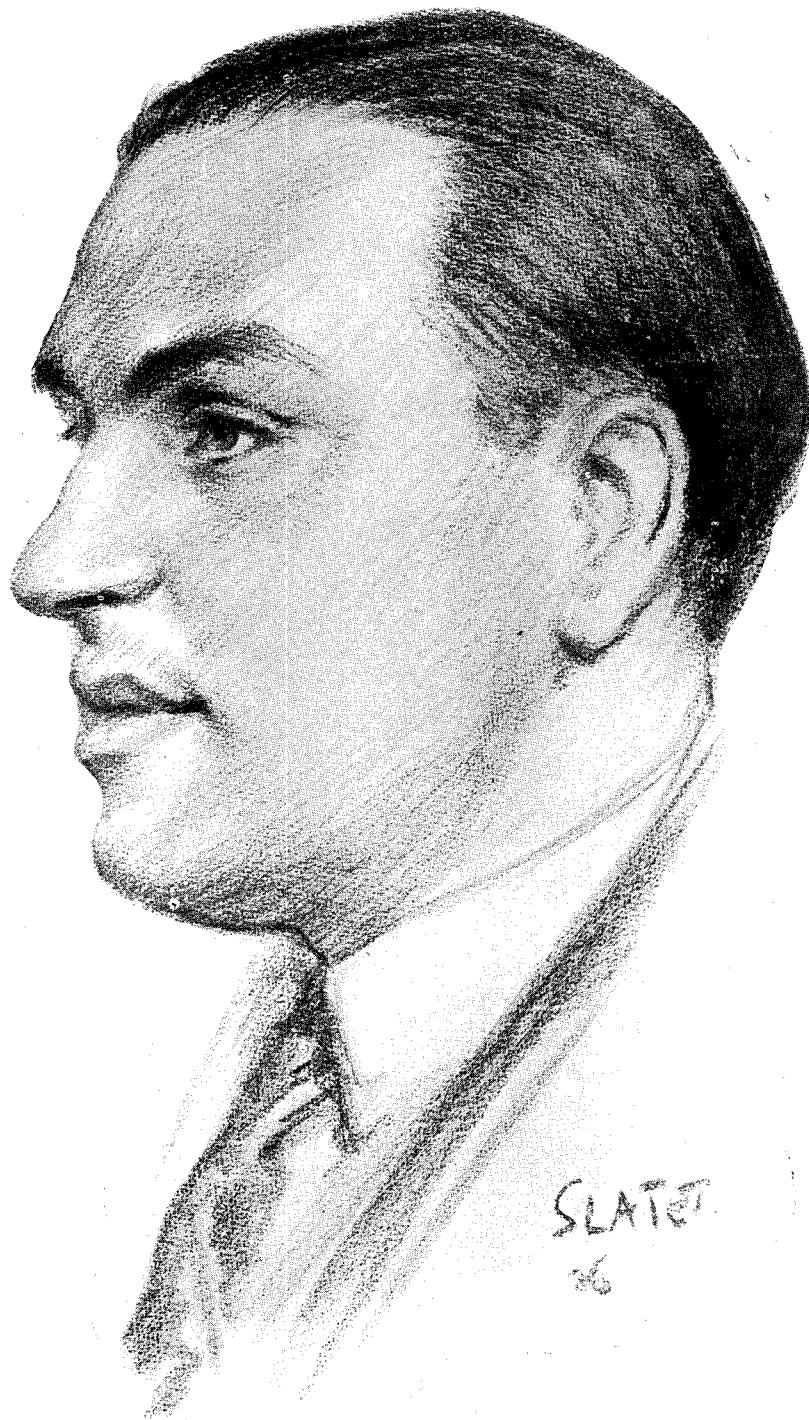
JOHN LAMB AND THE ETON BOYS.

By JOHN M. TURNBULL.

" . . . He says some of the best things in the world—and declareth that wit is his aversion. It was he who said, upon seeing the Eton boys at play in their grounds—*What a pity to think, that these fine ingenious lads will in a few years all be changed into frivolous Members of Parliament!*"

LAMB repeats this sally of "James Elia," in the essay "My Relations," as though he took for granted his readers' previous acquaintance with it.

He might of course have employed the locution with which it is introduced merely to heighten the verisimilitude of the reported occasion of its utterance; though, as a matter of fact, he was justified in assuming such an understanding. But nine months earlier than the publication of "My Relations" in the *London Magazine*, Hazlitt, in the course of a dramatic review in the issue of that periodical for October, 1820, moralising on the difference in appearance of Grimaldi, the



From a drawing by Frank E. Slater.

Philip Guedalla.

clown, on and off the stage, concluded in the following terms :

" . . . Life cannot always retain its newest gloss : the natural progress of things is never from 'grave to gay,' but always 'from lively to severe' : and we remember being struck with the remark of a friend, on seeing a number of Eton boys playing at cricket—'What a pity it was that all those fine-looking lads should become d—d stupid Members of Parliament at last !' "

If in repeating this anecdote Lamb was, as there is little reason to doubt, relating fact, it now becomes clear that the companion of "James Elia" (John Lamb) on this occasion was none other than William Hazlitt. This glimpse of the jovial and burly John interesting himself in cricket in the company of the man whom in 1816 he had knocked down—they shook hands immediately afterwards—enhances the materiality of a character which, in spite of the "Shandean lights" focused upon it by his famous brother, is still for us but a shadowy actuality. Although this story furnishes the most definite association on record of the Lamb family with the game of cricket, it is not solitary. In the little paper of memories prepared by Miss Nyren for Mr. E. V. Lucas, it is related that John Nyren of the famous Hambledon Club, her grandfather and author of "The Cricketers of my Time," used to meet Charles Lamb at Vincent Novello's "Sunday Evenings"—those "minor heavens" of "A Chapter on Ears."

The ultimate origin of the story is to be found in Hazlitt's "Table Talk," Essay No. 1: "The Qualifications Necessary to Success in Life." Hazlitt took it in an inverted form from Thomas Gray, and it is tempting to conclude that John Lamb, happening on it in the pages of the *London*, stored it in his subconscious memory until just such an occasion as that related by the two essayists called it forth once again, refashioned by that whimsical enemy of wit. Discussing the necessity of dignity to success, Hazlitt in this essay quotes as follows from one of Gray's letters :

" . . . Don't you remember Lord C— and Lord M—who are now great statesmen, little dirty boys playing at cricket? For my own part, I don't feel myself a bit taller or older or wiser than I did then."

It is of course possible that Hazlitt, having previously quoted Gray's confession, may have invented the supposed John Lamb version of it himself; though as the alternative is equally possible, one is naturally averse to depriving the ostensible hero of the benefit of so tantalising a doubt.

I am unable to trace the quotation through the index

to any of the complete editions of Gray's letters; but as none of his Eton contemporaries became Lord M— during the poet's lifetime, it may be inferred that Hazlitt misquoted. Had Gray, as is probable, referred in his letter to Pitt and Murray—the latter of whom was not raised to the peerage until after Gray's death—it is even more probable that the more dignified and familiar titles that each later assumed would linger in Hazlitt's memory and obtrude themselves on his recollection of Gray's reminiscences. Lords Mansfield and Chatham are elsewhere coupled by Hazlitt, as in his essay, "On Consistency of Opinion," in the course of which he confides to the reader the revolutionary Southey's assertion that "he saw nothing to admire in the eloquence of such men as Mansfield and Chatham; and what did it all end in, but their being made lords?" In any case, be Gray's exact wording what it may, there can be no doubt that it is to these two noble personages that Lamb's anecdote owes its distinguished lineage.

With Hazlitt's dramatic review quoted above still before me, it is difficult to refrain from quoting therefrom in connection with a seemingly unfortunate observation contained in a very charming essay on Lamb contributed to *THE BOOKMAN* for March, 1903. The writer said of Lamb :

" . . . His genius was idiosyncrasy; his idiosyncrasy was genius. . . . It is hard to idiosyncratise any quality of the mind, but it is harder to idiosyncratise humour than any other quality. It is like jumping off one's shadow and leaving it nailed to the ground. Lamb jumped off his shadow with unerring agility. 'I confess an occasional nightmare; but I do not, as in early youth, keep a stud of them.' In that sentence he jumps off at the word 'stud.' Nobody but Lamb could have thought of it."

It is easy to be wise after the event, but to me the association of the word "stud" with nightmares has never seemed other than obvious. The association may have occurred independently to Lamb's mind. It may even have been borrowed from his verbal utterance for serving up in print before he himself introduced it into his essay, "Witches and other Night Fears." But to our knowledge he certainly was not the first in the field on that horse. The essay on witches was published a whole year after an article by Hazlitt in which, describing the effect of Mrs. Brooke's acting in the part of Madge Wildfire's ghastly mother, in "The Heart of Midlothian," he declared himself "thankful that we did not see her in our childhood. She would have ridden our pillows. She is equal to a whole *stud* of night-mares." The italics are Hazlitt's.

"SAKI."*

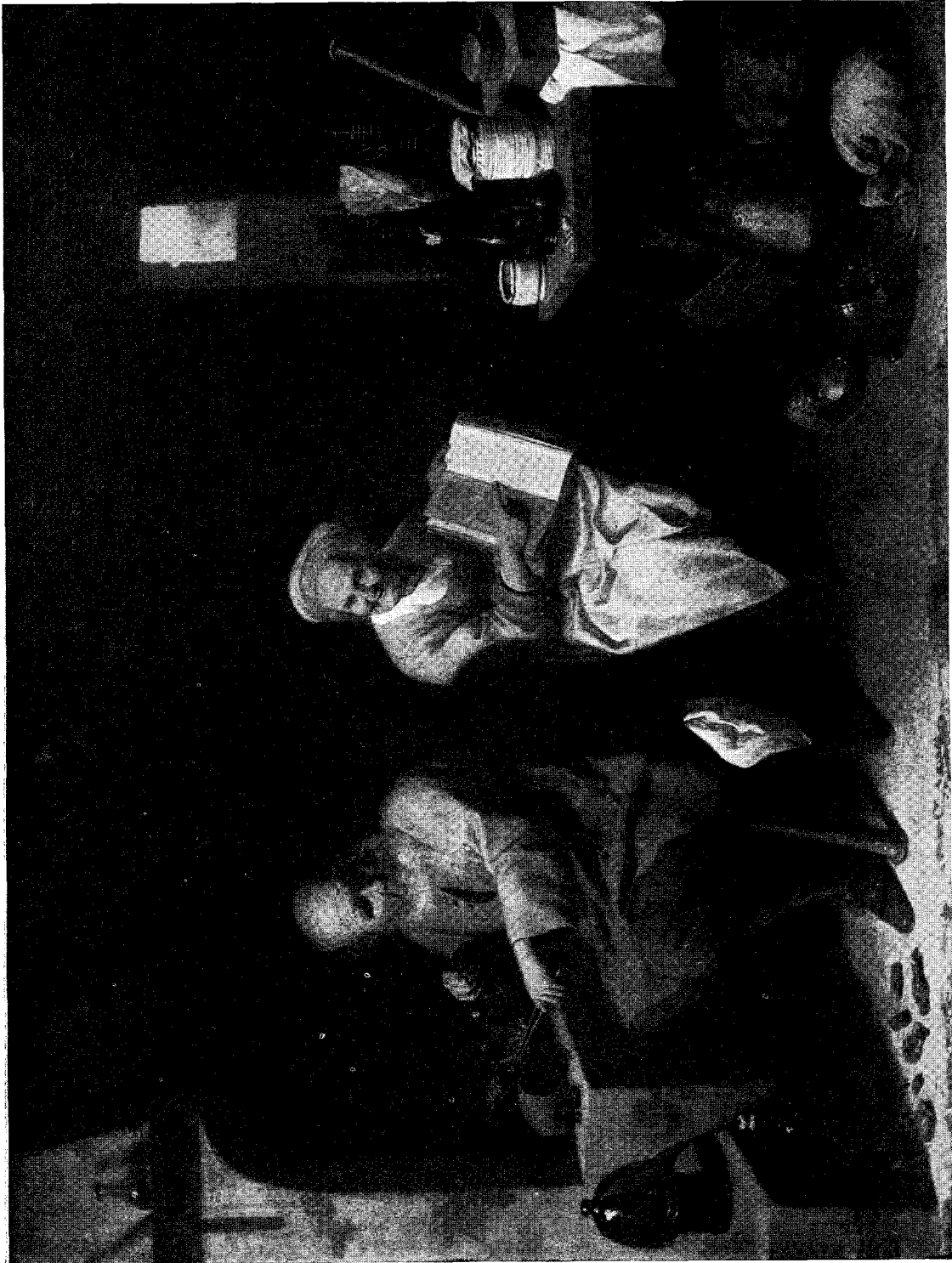
By L. P. HARTLEY.

IT is not easy to write about "Saki," for he needs neither interpreter nor prophet. What he was like himself we do not know, though the introductions furnished by various distinguished authors to this slender—all too slender—septette, his collected works, give us some idea. Among other things he was clearly a hero, for he joined the Army when war broke out, at the age of forty-four, as a private; and two years

later, promoted to corporal, he was killed in action. How different in its setting the last two years of his life from the drawing-rooms and fashionable resorts in which his Muse loved to wander! If indeed a Muse as impatient, succinct and epigrammatic as his could be said to wander: "march" is a more accurate description of her gait; she moves with a military precision, is always on iron rations, always under orders, an Amazon among her gentler sisters.

Whatever then Munro the man, Munro the writer

* "The Collected Works of 'Saki.'" By H. H. Munro. 3s. 6d. each. (Bodley Head.)



A Chemist in his Laboratory.
By David Rychaert (dated 1648).

From "Early Netherlands Maiolica." By Bernard Rackham, Keeper of the Department of Ceramics in the Victoria and Albert Museum (Geoffrey Bles).

was a literary soldier, disciplined, not irregular, who went the nearest way to his objective and generally took it. One cannot, in thinking of him, get away from the military metaphor. His style indeed was a more delicate weapon than modern soldiers carry; it is a sister-blade to Max Beerbohm's, stouter than his perhaps, and more prone to frontal attacks, but not less piercing and leaving as clean a wound. The conduct of his narratives, brief or long, resembles a campaign; the rough, rebellious surface of life is mapped out; its defences are carefully enveloped, then taken by surprise; finally with a grand assault its stronghold is reduced, and the whole barren region is added to the orderly empire of art. How his stories sparkle, sometimes with a distracting glitter! What traces do they not bear of spit and polish, of superfluity discarded, of symmetry achieved! Hardy, ascetic, mobile, what agonies of private drilling must they have gone through, before they were allowed to appear in public, on parade, no paragraph incomplete, no comma missing, no sentence awry!

It is true that amid the rattle of rifles and light arms we seldom detect the boom of a heavy gun. "Saki" carried few heavy guns. What weight he had (and it was considerable) was a personal quality and, like charity, it stayed at home, forming the emplacement from which his machine-guns directed their devastating fire. Without this savage fundamental seriousness his shots would have gone astray; we should have heard their impressive rattle, we should not have seen the victims fall. We may tire of his exhibitions of marksmanship; we may feel, in moments of satiety, that he is only bringing down clay pigeons; but all the same there is no disputing the deadliness of the shot or the accuracy of the aim. Exactly from what dump Munro drew his ammunition it is hard to say, but it was inexhaustible. He hated, and he believed. Perhaps it would be true to say that he hated what he believed in, and believed in what he hated. He believed that Nature was red in tooth and claw and that life was cruel, and he had some kind of respect for the qualities in men which were consonant with such a view of life. He believed in living dangerously, and he never mentions death, single or multitudinous, accidental or contrived, without a throb of delight. Here is a scrap of dialogue showing how his Comic Spirit feasted on the idea of mortality:

"Good gracious! How many lives have been lost?"

"Heaps, I should say. The second housemaid has already identified three bodies that have floated past the billiard-room window as being the young man she's engaged to. Either she's engaged to a large assortment of the population round here, or else she's very careless at identification. Of course it may be the same body coming round again and again in a swirl; I hadn't thought of that."

We are reminded of Captain Harry Graham and "The Ruthless Rhymes." But for Munro cruelty was not so much the vehicle of humour as the source. It was not an escape from life but an intensification of it. "Gentle dullness ever loves a joke," said Pope, but he would not have so described "Saki," who was always willing to wound, and never afraid to strike. He loves the spectacle of mankind brought to misfortune and ridicule by its follies. He loves to see the unwary pedestrian

slipping on the orange-peel. He tolerates, he delights in practical jokes; discomfiture and humiliation are as breath to his nostrils, balm to his soul, and he always thinks them funny. Time and again, as one of his characters is artlessly preparing to sit down, does he (metaphorically) pull away the chair and start the general laugh. He loathes meekness and weakness; irony, the refuge of sensitive minds from the world, is unknown to him; he is a satirist pure and simple.

Yet though he acquiesces in cruelty he does not spare the cruel. Comus Bassington, the hero of his most considerable book, is within the limits of his intelligence as odious a character as has ever been drawn. The passage in which, when at school, he canes the new boy who had been recommended to his protection, is a masterpiece of venom. All the more hateful characteristics of schoolboys, their herd-instinct, their desire and power to hurt, their ability to rise in their own esteem only upon the abasement of others, their fertility and resourcefulness in cruelty, all these traits are in a few brief pages exquisitely delineated. It is a passage which any one of Munro's characters, could he have obtained it, would have rushed to place in the hands of some apprehensive mother who was sending off her boy to school. There must be numbers of people who, having read it, have decided not to let their offspring face such an ordeal. But Munro has provided Comus with an Achilles heel. In the ways of the world he is fundamentally stupid—he doesn't know which side his bread is buttered; and so, as the moralist would say, he is shipped off to Nigeria to die of fever. His mother had doted on him, as far as her realisation that, if there were five plovers' eggs he would always take three, permitted her to dote. He and her one Old Master, cherished symbol of overt respectability and latent wealth, were the apples of her eye. On the same day, almost at the same moment, she finds she has lost both; Comus is dead and the picture is declared a copy.

"The Unbearable Bassington" would be a better book, as Mr. Baring has pointed out, if it showed a sense of pity. It does, twice. Once when Lady Caroline hears of Comus's death; once when Elaine talks to the explorer and big-game hunter whose active life had been cut short by an accident. The passage is worth quoting, for it shows a side of Munro that he usually concealed. Generally he takes his stand with the big battalions; here he ranges himself with Cato, who preferred to find himself on the losing side. The passage is very poignant:

"'You are a person to be envied,' [Elaine] said to Keriway; 'you have created a fairy-land, and you are living in it yourself.'"

"'Envied?'"

"He shot the question out with sudden bitterness. She looked down and saw the wistful misery that had come into his face."

"'Once,' he said to her, 'in a German paper I read a short story about a tame crippled crane that lived in the park of some small town. I forget what happened in the story, but there was one line that I shall always remember: 'It was lame, that is why it was tame.'"

"He had created a fairyland but assuredly he was not living in it."

"Saki" then had a softer side, but it was the ferocious quality of his mind that gave life and impetus to his

stories. This ferocity, let us hasten to add, is present in some, indeed in most, of his tales only as a rumour or a perfume, expressing itself in a thousand delicious shafts of malice, a hundred ingenious *dénouements*. Sometimes he thinks a story is funny in proportion as it is "tall"; sometimes his wit declines into facetiousness. But at its best it is admirable. True, the dialogue is artificial—people don't talk like that; but no doubt they would if they could. O! to be a Clovis, one thinks enviously, or a Reginald, who can subdue with a word the most insistent bore, encounter on equal terms the most brilliant Duchess. To have a life crammed with mirth-provoking incidents; to meet only two sorts of people; grindstones on which to sharpen the arrows of one's wit, plump defenceless bodies

in which to plunge them. Though it is depressing to discover that not even Munro's silliest character, not even Merla Blathlington herself, can keep up her stupidity for long; she has to say something clever, or her creator would die of boredom. Munro will have a lasting reputation. His wit is not merely verbal, never merely a trick; it refreshes itself at a hundred sources and all his experience goes to feed it. His characters have a similarity, sometimes a sameness; his wit has an inexhaustible fertility and (a rare thing in this class of writing) it is reinforced by a sense of humour no less omnivorous. Dapper yet virile, cruel yet without personal animosity, the figure of "Saki" will be cherished by all who love first-rate craftsmanship in letters.

THE BOOKMAN PRIZE COMPETITIONS.

JANUARY, 1927.

Answers to these Competitions (each on a separate sheet bearing the name and address of the sender) should be forwarded not later than the 14th of the month to

"The Prize Page," THE BOOKMAN, Messrs. Hodder & Stoughton, Ltd., Warwick Square, London, E.C.4.

Colonial and foreign readers please note that Competitions II, IV and V are the same each month, and that Competition I will be for the best original lyric until three months' notice of a change has been given.

SPECIAL NOTICE.—Competitors must please keep copies of their MSS.; the Editor cannot undertake to return them.

- I.—A PRIZE OF ONE GUINEA is offered for the best original lyric.
- II.—A PRIZE OF HALF A GUINEA is offered for the best quotation from English verse applicable to any review or the name of any author or book appearing in this number of THE BOOKMAN. Preference will be given to quotations of a humorous nature.
- III.—A PRIZE OF THREE NEW BOOKS is offered for the best letter in not more than one hundred and fifty words supposed to have been written by Pepys describing a day spent in modern London.
- IV.—A PRIZE OF HALF A GUINEA is offered for the best review, in not more than one hundred words, of any recently published book. Competitors should give the names of Authors and Publishers at head of review.
- V.—A copy of THE BOOKMAN will be sent *post free* for *twelve months* to the sender of the best suggestion for THE BOOKMAN Competitions. The Editor reserves the right to use any suggestions submitted.

Within the flowing hair of her
A golden glory gleams:
A way so wondrous mild's with her,
With all my soul I vow 't—
I'd rather walk the wilds with her
Than win to heaven without!

LIAM P. CLANCY.

RESULTS OF COMPETITIONS FOR NOVEMBER—DECEMBER.

- I.—THE PRIZE for the best original lyric is divided and HALF A GUINEA each awarded to Liam P. Clancy, 26, Parliament Hill, Hampstead, N.W.3, and Winnifred Tasker, 27, Meadway, Gidea Park, Essex, for the following:

LADY OF MY DREAMS.

Very beautiful she is,
The Lady of my Dreams!
The music of the voice of her
Is sweet as singing streams.
The stormy deep I'd brave with her,
And O! did Fate allow 't,
I'd liefer live a slave with her
Than reign a king without.

Very wonderful she is,
The Lady of my Dreams!



The Senate.

From "Paris," by Sidney Dark (Macmillan).

TAKE YOUR VIOLIN AND PLAY.

Take your violin and play
Songs that charm the years away—
Those they sang in olden times
Set to wistful, haunting rhymes ;
Play the magic song of June
Fashioned but for Love's delight,
Tender, plaintive as a tune
Heard beneath the moonbeams white.

Take your violin and play,
Charm the twilight hours away ;
Send forth sorrow from the earth,
Lend me Love and lend me Mirth,
Play the song of trees again—
April songs when life was gay,
Sunlight, piercing clouds of rain—
Take your violin and play.

Drive away the cold and gloom,
Send the shadows from the room,
Play a song of sweet July—
Stars first waking in the sky :
All the tunes you played of old
Blown from hills and lakes of blue,
Straight from Autumn's store of gold—
Those they sang when Troy was new—

Take your violin and play
Songs that charm the years away.

WINNIFRED TASKER.

We also select for printing :

THE FAIRY SHIP.

A fairy ship o'er a rainbow sea
Brings magic merchandise to me,
Parcelled dreams of long ago
When knights adventuring did go,
Corded boxes of wondrous deeds,
Memories of ladies on milk-white steeds ;
Kisses that woke princesses asleep,
Boy Blue's horn that called the sheep,
Goblin trinkets and elfish fare,
Locks of Queen Titania's hair ;
Pixie porters carry all ashore,
Deliver them safely to my front door.
O, a fairy ship o'er a rainbow sea
Brings magic merchandise to me.

(Cecil Leader, 59, Grove Road, West Green, N.15.)

A PRAYER.

God grant the paths of Heaven
Will prove my dreams come true,
To find the flowers of Heaven
Are pink and mauve and blue,
To find the trees of Heaven
Are green as Earthly trees,
The Wind that blows in Heaven
Soft as an Earthly breeze ;
Cities of gold and jewels, to me
Would be of little worth,
I only ask that Heaven may be
As beautiful as Earth.

(Miss E. Goodall, The Dell, Oulton Broad,
Suffolk.)

We also highly commend the lyrics by J. Kilmeny
Keith (Kensington), Alfred H. Mendes (Trinidad),
T. Maudsley (Croydon), Anthony Gilbert (London, W.C.),
George S. Astins (Clacton-on-Sea), C. Plummer (Ontario),
N. M. Turner (Bristol), Carmichael Monro (Addiscombe),
M. Snow (Oxford), R. Scott Frayn (Bournemouth),
Ivan Adair (Leeds), Richard J. Hine (Highgate), Ierne
Ormsby (Addiscombe), Mrs. Emma S. Dakin (Amherst,
Mass.), Irene Wintle (Durham), T. E. Casson (Newton-
le-Willows), Mrs. W. Brown (Dehra Dun, India), M.
Forbes Myers (Bournemouth), W. Leonard Fenin (Man-
chester), C. E. J. Cragg (Toronto), R. Fortescue Doria

(Cheltenham), M. H. Clarke (Woolwich), Iva Weldon
(Eastbourne), Helena Derezsinska (Warsaw), H. L.
Baker (Stockport), L. M. G. Spencer (Ipswich), Joyce
E. J. Collard (Wincanton), B. M. Beard (Bexleyheath),
Kathleen Simmonds (Carshalton), Beth Collis (Esqui-
malt, B.C., Canada), G. Archibald Jackson (Bramhall),
J. H. P. Chadburn (Minia, Upper Egypt), Marjorie
Crosbie (Wolverhampton), E. A. Macintyre (Broughty
Ferry), Stuart Ayers (London, S.E.), Gertrude Pitt
(London, N.), Vera I. Arlett (Worthing), Margot K. M.
Brown (Southampton), Marcella Whitaker (Brandsby),
A. D. Maule (Cockermouth), R. M. Niven (London, S.E.),
Kathleen Lee (Forest Gate), Irene Petch (Kirbymoore-
side), Edith Pryor (Brighton), W. S. de J. Rankine
(Oxford), May Mullane (Glasgow), Norman A. Cameron
(Aberdeen), M. J. Hare (Hexham), Leta Mendus (Car-
diff), Esther Samms (Luton), N. F. Hamilton (Glasgow).

II.—THE PRIZE OF HALF A GUINEA for the best
quotation is awarded to J. E. Parsons, Hill-
ston, Ware, Herts, for the following :

HIGH SILVER. BY ANTHONY RICHARDSON.
(Constable.)

"Twinkle, twinkle, little star."

We also select for printing :

ENCOUNTERS. BY IFOR EVANS.
(Hodder & Stoughton.)

"As I was going to St. Ives,
I met a man with seven wives."

Nursery Rhyme.

(J. Pollock, Carlisle Road, Londonderry,
Northern Ireland.)

SOUR GRAPES. BY HAROLD BINDLOSS.
(Ward, Lock.)

"When he had eaten eighteen he turned perfectly green."

SIR W. S. GILBERT, *Bab Ballads*.

(S. B. Johns, Bryn Haven, Summerhill
Avenue, Newport, Mon.)

THE GOOSE-FEATHER BED.

BY E. TEMPLE THURSTON. (Putnams.)

"O bed ! O bed ! Delicious bed !"

THOMAS HOOD, *Her Dream*.

(Grace H. Hill, Northcote, The Ridgeway,
Mill Hill, N.W.7.)

THE MAGIC LAMPLIGHTER.

BY MARION ST. JOHN WEBB. (Harrap.)

"He spied far off, upon the ground,
A Something shining in the dark,
And knew the glow-worm by his spark."

COWPER, *The Nightingale and Glow-worm*.

(E. Sweatman, 15, Blenheim Road, Caversham,
Reading.)

HILL FRAGMENTS. BY MADELINE MASON-MANHEIM.
(Cecil Palmer.)

"Jack (and Jill went up the hill to fetch a pail of water ;
Jack fell down and broke his crown, and Jill came tumbling
after."

Nursery Rhyme.

(D. M. Carpenter, Oaklea, The Peth, Durham ; K.
Olive, 35, Brunswick Square, W.C.1 ; and C. A.
Mendick, Birchwood, Hoddesdon, Herts.)

THE RENT COLLECTOR. BY SAM LAW.
(Stockwell.)

"Oh, breathe not his name !"

MOORE'S *Irish Ballads*.

(Ethel M. Kennedy, 6, Iverna Court,
Kensington, W.8.)

III.—THE PRIZE OF THREE NEW BOOKS is awarded
to Mrs. Maude R. Fleeson, 26, Chatham Grove,
Withington, Manchester, for the following :

THE GREATEST MISTAKE MADE LAST YEAR.

"I thought I was a genius !"

We also select for special commendation the replies by Honoria Blyth (Highgate), Martha Bell (Northwood), Annalice Robinson (Southampton), J. N. Bannister (Leyland), H. E. Hunt (Dunstable), M. F. MacArthur (Fleet), J. E. Parsons (Ware), Alice M. Hillier (Bromley), M. Whitaker (Brandsby), James P. Higgins (Birstall), J. A. Jenkins (Liverpool), E. G. Irons (Chelsea), Kitty Doorly (London, S.W.), B. M. Beard (Bexleyheath), N. M. Turner (Bristol), M. Mullane (Glasgow), Mary Muir (Eastbourne), Sybil G. Gillett (London, S.W.).

IV.—THE PRIZE OF HALF A GUINEA for the best hundred word review is awarded to B. Noël Saxelby, 43, Claude Road, Chorlton-cum-Hardy, Manchester, for the following :

MY AFRICAN NEIGHBOURS.

BY HANS COUDENHOVE.

(Jonathan Cape.)

The author here offers us no superficial account of a journey or a hunting expedition, but the fruit of his experience during many years almost complete isolation from his own kind in the heart of Nyasaland. Ripe fruit it is, and mellow in flavour. There grows in the reader's mind an immense admiration and respect for this man, so sound and temperate is his judgment of his black brother, so gentle and considerate his attitude to his many and unusual animal friends, so much insight has he into Nature's ways. A modern Saint Francis!

We also select for printing :

WINNIE THE POOH. BY A. A. MILNE.
(Methuen.)

"Charming" has become a maid-of-all-work in its application—but there is no other adjective—in its truest definition, which so aptly describes this new young and "grown-up" children's book. Every page is delicious, and it leaves a beautiful and exquisite sense of feeling in the mind as well as in the secret soul. The lovely touch of the word-artist is everywhere visible, the sacred love of childhood permeates it, but most of all—and wholly so—it brings to remembrance the "cause" of Christmas, the claim of the Little Child. Thank you, Mr. Milne!

(A. E. Gowers, 12, Broad Street, Haverhill, Suffolk.)

THE VOICE OF DASHIN. BY "GANPAT."

(Hodder & Stoughton.)

Captain Gompertz has achieved another success with his latest volume, "The Voice of Dashin." This story of Upper Afghanistan, which the author knows so well, is

packed full of thrilling incident, and events move so quickly that one is loath to put the book down. It turns on the discovery of a wild race of neolithic peoples who inhabit the upper fastnesses of this romantic country. The characters are well chosen, and "Monocloid" is just the happy-go-lucky type of ex-officer whom we have all learnt to associate with the "Old Contemptibles." The dialogue is of a racy and humorous type, and "Monocloid's" efforts to found an artillery company complete with tanks and guns from material hitherto accustomed to bows and arrows, is one of the funniest things we have read for many a long day. Altogether it is a very clever and imaginative piece of work.

(A. B. Longbottom, 1115, London Road, Alvaston, Derby.)



Cromwell's Citadel, Leith.

From "The Fringes of Edinburgh." By John Geddie (Chambers).

We also specially commend the reviews by Eric J. H. Jones-Evans, M.R.C.S. (Southampton), Ruby Burnaby (London, S.W.), Charlotte Hoskins (Woking), Joan Eager (The Hague, Holland), Margot K. M. Brown (Southampton), J. A. Jenkins (Liverpool), A. E. Kerr (London, N.W.), Mrs. Emily E. Moore (Letchworth), H. C. Dent (Hove), W. H. Edge (Stockport), M. F. MacArthur (Fleet), E. Goldsmith (London, N.W.), A. M. Aldous (Hampstead), E. Milling (London, S.W.), Constance Maunsell (Dublin), H. F. Smart (Wallington), Joan Vale (Moss Vale, N.S.W.), A. M. Gibbins (Oxteed), Robert Scott (Selkirk), J. Victor Stalker (Dundee), Leonard Taylor (Victoria), James A. Richards (Tenby), Adeline A. Cocker (Gidea Park), G. Arnold (London, S.W.), Jack Dickens (Ruddington), Sybil Dean (Exmouth), H. D. Slater (Blackheath), Constance M. Bruce (Bingley), Alice M. Hillier (Bromley).

V.—THE PRIZE OF ONE YEAR'S SUBSCRIPTION TO THE BOOKMAN is awarded to George S. Astins, Hambrook, Wellesley Road, Clacton-on-Sea.

TOBIAS SMOLLETT.

BY ALFRED TRESIDDER SHEPPARD.

IN a declaration of faith, in the November BOOKMAN, Mr. Cranstoun Metcalfe has said what I have often thought. A good book once added to the treasury of literature is safe, in spite of vicissitudes of fortune. Deloney's "Thomas of Reading, or the Six Worthie Yeomen of the West," and Butler's "Way of All Flesh," far apart as they stand in date and subject, are recent instances of this survival of personality in novels. Roderick Random, Peregrine Pickle and Humphry Clinker still carry themselves gallantly among younger rivals, for all their many years.

Smollett was master of one trade, if Jack of all. Immensely industrious, amazingly versatile, little that interests mankind was alien to him. In his "Life and Letters of Tobias Smollett" * Mr. Lewis Melville has succeeded in recording, carefully and competently, every essential stage of an active and varied life. Smollett was not only novelist and poet ("a great novelist and a small poet," to quote George Gilfillan, whose brief biography Mr. Melville does not mention among his many authorities), but politician, physician, historian, translator, traveller, critic and writer of medical works. The sting has gone from the lines in which Cuthbert Shaw, feebly imitating "The Dunciad" in "The Race," taunted Smollett with his many trades:

"Next Smollett came. What author dare resist
Historian, critic, bard and novelist?
'To reach thy temple, honour'd Fame,' he cried,
'Where, where's the avenue I have not tried?'"

If Fame's temple were indeed the quest, he went down many a blind alley before reaching the centre of the maze. Scraps of song survive in his novels. His continuation of Hume's history is moribund, though not quite dead. His work in the *Critical Review* has followed those it criticised. The *Briton* died in childbirth leaving the *North Briton* as its lustier child. "The Regicide" is no less dead than James the First.

Mr. Melville's wide knowledge of the eighteenth century puts us in his debt. With his testy, quarrelsome and yet manly and generous hero as its central figure, we join a glorious company. Lady Mary Wortley Montagu complains that her "dear Smollett disgraces his talent by writing those stupid romances commonly called history." Sterne meets Smollett at Montpellier, reads his querulous "Travels," and claps him into "The Sentimental Journey" as Smelfungus.

"I popped upon Smelfungus again at Turin, and a sad tale of sorrowful adventures he had to tell. . . .

"'I'll tell it all,' cried Smelfungus, 'to the world.'

"'You had better tell it,' said I, 'to your physician.'"

Boswell writes to him; Johnson enlists his aid for his black servant, Francis Barber, taken by the press-gang; Wilkes, Garrick and Goldsmith visit him in the King's Bench prison; Dr. John Hunter enjoys his

hospitality at Chelsea; he dedicates his *British Magazine* to Pitt—Smollett's "Sir Launcelot Greaves," which ran through it in 1760-61, is the first instance of a serialised novel on record.

Mr. Melville's attitude towards the autobiographical element in Smollett's three living novels inclines towards excessive caution, and he hesitates to accept Smollett himself as evidence on the identity of Strap. To me all these books are largely autobiographical, even though Smollett turned his heroes into libertines and thieves. We have the siege of Carthage in detail, and the horrors of naval life are not much exaggerated by the man who experienced them, and was glad enough to leave the service. He probably did, like so many imaginative boys, have a rough time at his eighteenth century school. In every book he follows the phases of his career. Medicine and Bath waters figure largely; his prisons, duels, brawls, squabbles, inns, yokels, thieves were drawn from actual knowledge. One finds even his own green satin waistcoat in his pages. "It is to be hoped," says Mr. Melville, "that Smollett's journey" (from Scotland to London, in his youth), "was less exciting and more comfortable than that of Roderick Random." But does not Smollett's description ring true?

Perhaps caution even in excess dwells very near the virtues. Mr. Melville is generally a safe guide. I have my doubts about Smollett's coarseness being due to a desire to warn and repel rather than attract his heroes, even though he himself is called as witness. After all Roderick Random did find fortune smiling broadly on him after his scandalous career; the moral misses its mark. Whately, throwing his "historic doubts" around Napoleon, threw some over the cause he had at heart. Samuel Butler, with a different end in view, found himself hailed with enthusiasm as an apologist. In any case this is a dangerous game.

There are two rôles played by Smollett which I have overlooked. "Humphry Clinker" is the supreme example of that rare and more rarely successful form of fiction—the novel told in letters. Matthew and Tabitha Bramble are inimitable—and what a mine of information for the novelist writing of the earlier and middle years of the eighteenth century lies ready in all these letters! In "Listener's Lure" Mr. E. V. Lucas has essayed very happily a medium in which Smollett seems to me at his best.

He died at fifty-one, poor and in a foreign land. I notice that Mr. Melville says: "Of the last months of his life there is no record." But Thomas Seccombe gives as Smollett's final verdict on a life chequered, turbulent, often unhappy, yet always at least brave, his last words to the wife he loved so deeply: "All is well, my dear!"

We could spare the prophecies in the appendix about the loss of America and the Revolution in France—after all they were not published until twenty-four years after Smollett's death, and their genuineness is doubtful. But we cannot spare those five words.

* 12s. 6d. (Faber & Gwyer.)

THE BOOKMAN'S DIARY.

NOTICES.

All communications intended for the Editor must be addressed to the Editor of THE BOOKMAN, ST. PAUL'S HOUSE, WARWICK SQUARE, LONDON, E.C.4.

A preliminary letter of inquiry should be sent to the Editor before any manuscript is submitted for his consideration.

Of the group of writers that has of late brought the essay back into popularity, none has more of the authentic gift of the essayist than Mr. Robert Lynd. It might be interesting to compare him with others of the group, but I have no inclination to do so; it is enough that he goes his own way and has a charm and individuality of style that belong to himself and distinguish him from the rest even though, like them, he finds his themes in the ordinary everyday life that is round about us all. To say nothing of his essays in criticism, "The Little Angel" (6s.; Methuen) is the seventh book into which he has collected his periodical essays on men and women and things in general, and re-reading the first of these books you realise how he has not only increased in the mastery of his art, but is even fresher in thought, more felicitous in expression and more varied in idea now than when he began. Of course when all the affairs of mankind are within your province you have a subject you can never exhaust, and the imagination and humour with which he deals with it seem equally inexhaustible. The twenty-seven essays in this new volume cover all manner of topics; and are written with an unfailingly deft and a light hand. Some are irresponsibly frivolous, and such as have serious things to say say them with a quaint or gracious humour that send them to their mark more forcibly than if they came from the hands of the deadly solemn philosopher who has not the wit to feather his arrows. I am not going into details, because without copious quotations I could not hope to convey the good common sense of such essays as

"Changes in Human Nature," or the whimsical philosophy of such as "On Lent," "The Little Angel," or "The Dean"; or the wistful whimsicality of such as "The Empty House"; or the naturalness with which something of tenderness and beauty is touched into such a farcical sketch as "Quiet." To know how well it is worth reading

this is the sort of book you must read for yourself, and there are not too many of which one is for such good reason reduced to saying that.

Since "Tell England," I think Mr. Ernest Raymond has written no finer novel than that in the two volumes of "Daphne Bruno" and "The Fulfilment of Daphne Bruno." These have now been issued by Messrs. Cassell, the two at the price of one, enclosed in a neat box, and in this form should have a renewed popularity among New Year gift-books.

Twelve volumes of the collected Essex edition of Mr. H. G. Wells's works are now out (3s. 6d. each; Benn), and they serve to bring home to one the extraordinary range of Mr. Wells's genius, and to remind us that he has not

gone the acceptable way to success and run in a recognised groove, for these first twelve include stories so various as "The First Men in the Moon" and "The New Machiavelli," "The Food of the Gods" and "Tono Bungay." I noticed somebody writing the other day that Wells was no humorist, but whoever thinks that should read him again, for there is humour no less in his wildest fantasies, such as "The Invisible Man," than in the most realistic of his stories. This Essex edition is strongly and artistically bound, clearly printed on good, thin paper, and the volumes are of a very handy size for the pocket.

The English Committee of the Femina-Bookman Prize, which includes some of the most distinguished



A caricature by Raphael Nelson.

Mr. W. Pett Ridge,

whose new book, "London Types" (Methuen), illustrated with camera studies by E. O. Hoppé, was reviewed in the Christmas BOOKMAN.

women writers of to-day, met last week, under the presidency of Madame Norman Bohn, to decide upon the three English books from which the French Committee should be asked to select the one to which they will award the Femina prize. A large number of books, published between June, 1925, and June last, had been considered, and the three finally chosen were Mr. Liam O'Flaherty's "The Informer," Miss Sylvia Townsend Warner's "Lolly Willows," and Miss Radclyffe Hall's "Adam's Breed."

When I wrote in this Diary last September something of Mr. Clement Shorter's career as author and journalist, on the occasion of his retirement from the editorship of the *Sphere*, I had not thought I should so soon have to add to that note a record of his death. He died last month at the age of sixty-nine, after more than a year's illness. When I saw him a few months before the end, he was very feeble but, by holding on to my arm and using a stick, contrived to take a walk round his beautiful garden at Great Missenden, and though he said he never expected to see London again, he was planning to get to work quietly at home on his unfinished Memoirs and, on his own suggestion, arranged to write for THE BOOKMAN an article that was never to be written on some of his experiences as a collector of first editions. Book-collecting was his one extravagance, but obviously he found such keen delight in it as must have been worth far more than all the money it cost him. In his thirty-six years as editor, first of the *Illustrated London News* and *Sketch* and then, for twenty-six years, of the *Sphere*, he introduced very notable improvements into the method of reproducing pictures in illustrated periodicals, and his weekly literary letter in the *Sphere* was the most candid and individual thing of the kind in contemporary journalism. He was a specialist in whatever concerned the Brontës, "Omar" FitzGerald, Borrow and Dr. Johnson; had manuscripts and first editions of theirs among the treasures of his library, and his chief works as a man of letters are editions of their books, and his own "Charlotte Brontë and her Circle." His short, unmistakable figure, the strong, swarthy face, the mass of curly grey hair, a bundle of papers and books usually under one arm, will always be haunting Fleet Street and the Strand in the remembrances of many of us, and, with

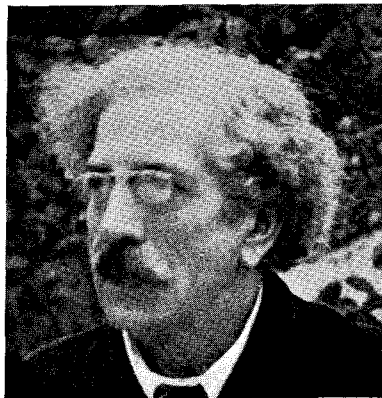


Photo by
Miss Compton Collier.

**Mr. Clement
Shorter.**

his impulsive ways of writing and saying whatever was in his mind and promptly making amends when he found he had wounded anybody with what he had said, he will remain in our remembrance, too, not only as a vividly picturesque and outstanding personality, but as one of the warmest-hearted of friends.

Mr. Leonard Rossiter will probably be told—has no doubt been told already—that his "That Ridiculous Woman" (Selwyn & Blount) is a remarkable first novel, and it certainly is. His skill and relentlessness in the portrayal of character are enough of themselves to give his book distinction, and his theme—the tale of a plain woman who imagines herself beautiful—is worked out with an ingenuity and tenseness of feeling that hold the reader closely interested to the last. Evelyn Berrick is convincingly real; one finds her contemptible, laughable, pitiful; is exasperated with her and sorry for her; but all the time finds her extraordinarily interesting. "That Ridiculous Woman" is a brilliant piece of work, and I am not surprised to see that it is already in its second edition. Mr. Rossiter is another recruit to literature from the Bar. He is a member of the Middle Temple, who served throughout the war (1914 to 1919) in the East and in France with the East Yorkshire Regiment, was twice wounded, and retired with the rank of captain. He has dabbled in free-lance journalism and has written stories for the magazines in his spare time from the Bar, but only turned to literary work in earnest about four years ago. At present he is engaged on another novel which has a certain type of English industrialist for its principal character.

One of our prize competitors, whose name and address was given when a contribution of hers was recently printed, has received the following letter from a gentleman whose native home is on the Gold Coast: "Dear Unknown —, When investigating a newspaper called THE BOOKMAN I saw many names and addresses of competitors but yours being a noble name and also charmed me to the profound variety, I took the golden opportunity of writing you to keep a regular correspondence with you from time. Don't you very fond of hearing news abroad by keeping in writing, I am in capacity of writing you news here



Photo by Coster:
Photographer of Men

**Mr. Leonard
Rossiter.**

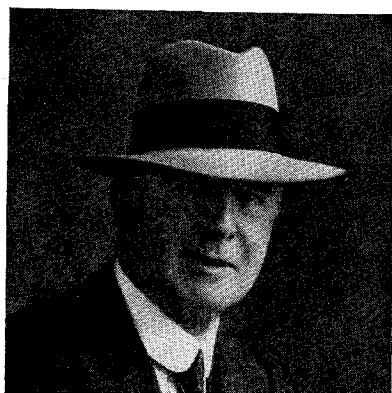


Photo by
Chaplin Jones.

Mr. John Long.

either weekly or monthly. Is that address correct? I proposed to forward you ostrich feathers, monkey skin, gold stone, honey and many other curiosities of Gold Coast, but afterwards I was a bit frightened that per (adventure) adventure they will not reach you because of improper printing of address. By that, if this reaches you hesitate to response; so that I forward them to you. Kindly in return mail forward me one only shirt (size 3), 8 handkerchiefs in any kind, fountain pen, and newspapers of any kind. I believe you will not fail to do so at the earliest possible date. Thanking you in anticipation, Yours very sincerely——." In forwarding the letter our competitor justly remarks that the proposed correspondence seems likely to involve considerable responsibilities, so she has decided not to respond; and asks us not to print her name in case similar correspondents should be attracted by its nobility.

After being actively engaged in publishing for thirty-five years, Mr. John Long has retired, having sold his business for a large cash consideration to Messrs. Hutchinson, who will carry it on under the name of John Long, Limited, with Mr. H. R. Hale, who has been with the John Long firm for over twenty years, as its Managing Director. During his many years of publishing Mr. Long published the works of a large number of well-known contemporary authors, the most popular being, I suppose, Nat Gould, whose total sales are said to exceed the colossal figure of twenty-four million copies, and of whose novels over seventy-five have appeared under Mr. Long's auspices. A Devonian by birth, Mr. Long is the son of Henry Holmes Long, who was a contemporary of Charles Lamb's in the service of the East India Company.

Although Mr. T. Fisher Unwin's business has been taken over by Messrs. Ernest Benn, he has not retired into private life but remains actively associated with it as manager and literary adviser. He has just been writing

in *T.P.'s and Cassell's Weekly* something of his own story, and while he tells of several famous authors whose books have borne his imprint, he leaves as many unmentioned, for it would have been impossible for him to render a full account of them in three columns, and is more impossible for me to do so in the more limited space at my disposal. He published the first and last books of Conrad, and books by John Oliver Hobbes, Olive Schreiner, "Ouida," Louis Becke, George Moore, Mark Rutherford, and to say nothing of others, the first novels of Forrest Reid and of Ethel M. Dell in his "First Novel Library" series. I have touched only on popular fiction; if I attempted a list of important works in general literature that have come from his house I should not know where to begin or to end. He is a good Londoner, and tells us, in *T.P.'s*, that he was born in Dowgate Hill, Cannon Street, when his father,

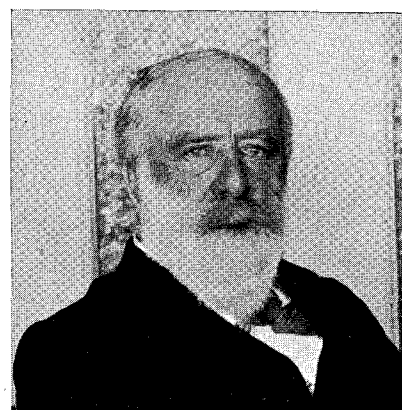


Photo by
Alfrist Picture Service.

Mr. T. Fisher Unwin.

Jacob Unwin, had printing premises in Bucklersbury, and a little while ago the centenary of that firm founded by his father was duly commemorated. Also his mother's family, the Millers of Haddington, were printers, authors, publishers and booksellers, so "I had printer's ink in my blood on both sides." After working for twenty years in all departments of the publishing house of Jackson, Walford and Hodder—now Messrs. Hodder & Stoughton—he started for himself in the business he conducted with such enterprise and success for forty-four years and still continues to manage, since he finds, he says, that though the days of his youth are ended his energy is not exhausted.



Mr. W. G. Clifford,

whose new volume, "Books in Bottles," was published recently by Mr. Geoffrey Bles.



Mr. James Milne.

Although I am not sure whether a talk with Dr. Johnson was always a joy to his hearer, I know of no better reading than Boswell's record of his talks, and "love the man this side of idolatry" as well as any. Every book that has anything to tell of him is a book for me. I have never read the Memoirs of Miss Laetitia Matilda Hawkins, which were published in three volumes between 1822 and 1824; the book seems to have gone out of print and is not easily obtainable; and I am glad that Mr. Francis H. Skrine has distilled from that copious work certain chapters concerning Johnson and some of his contemporaries and has given us these in "Gossip About Dr. Johnson and Others" (Eveleigh Nash)—a stout volume that was well worth compiling in this form, making Miss Hawkins's work current again. Laetitia Hawkins was twenty-four when Johnson died. Her father, Sir John Hawkins, was one of Johnson's friends and his first biographer; Johnson visited at their house, and she went occasionally with her father to call upon him. It is evident from some of Laetitia's notes that her family was jealous of Boswell, and of the great success of his Life of Johnson; but she is honest enough to say, "While I depreciate one who has done far more to depreciate himself, I must not be unjust to Boswell's Life of Samuel Johnson. It is entertaining to a degree which makes my father's book seem cold, stiff and turgid, indeed I cannot but think it the worst thing he ever did." She was a maiden lady of over sixty when she published her Memoirs, living in a house at Twickenham which is still standing. Her style is now and then a little prim, and sometimes has a hint of vinegar in it; but in the main she is a lively gossip, can turn an anecdote neatly, does not forget what she has heard, and reports graphically what she has seen.



Miss Adele Blood.

My first recollection of Dr. Johnson," she writes, "is watching him approach our house to pay one of his customary visits. He walked heavily but at a great rate, with his left arm always stretched across his chest, bringing the hand under his chin. My

brother Henry saw him get out of a hackney coach in Fleet Street and make his way up the entrance to Bolt Court in zigzag fashion, almost brushing against the wall in either side. His clothes hung loosely, and the right-hand pocket swung violently, the lining of the coat on that side being always visible. I remember a tailor bringing his pattern-book to show my brothers, and pointing out a purple cloth, such as no one else wore, as the Doctor's usual choice. We all shouted with amazement on learning that 'Polypheme'—as I am ashamed to say we nicknamed him—ever had a new coat, but the tailor assured us that he was a good customer. Even now I can call up his brown hands, metal sleeve-buttons and plain wristbands at a time when all gentlemen wore lace ruffles. . . ."

There are delightful reminiscences of Garrick, Sir Joshua Reynolds, Bennet Langton, for whom Laetitia had a high admiration; she has memories of Johnson's ponderous playfulness with her when she was a child; and, among others about him, one anecdote of Goldsmith that is as charmingly characteristic of him as any I recall:



Miss Nancy Roper.

"We were well-disciplined children, and taught to be very respectful to our seniors; but I little thought that I should live to boast of Goldsmith's showing me how to play Jack and Jill with two bits of paper on his fingers."

She disliked Johnson's negro servant, Frank Barber, and was indignant when at Johnson's funeral Barber "insisted on a seat in one of the mourning coaches being given to a low connection of his wife," but applauds her father's wisdom in giving way to this importunity, "thinking gradations of rank might be disregarded in such a ceremony." But I have said enough to indicate that Mr. Skrine has done well in condensing the best of Miss Hawkins's three volumes into one; and he has completed his book with an interesting introductory account of her and of her father.

The first book of a very young author makes its appearance on the first day of this year. It is a novel called "Dionys," a story based on the Scandinavian sagas, and the publishers are Messrs. Alston Rivers. The author, Miss Nancy Roper, is now only seventeen; she has been writing since the early age of eight, but this is the first of her novels to be put into print.

There are pleasant chapters in Mr. James Milne's "Pages in Waiting" (6s.; Lane) on "John Morley, Bookman," on "Queen Victoria in her Letters," and one on "Sir Harry Lauder's Burns," from which you gather that the great Scots comedian has written a book on Scotland's greatest poet, and read from it some extracts which Mr. Milne embodies in his essay. Mr. Milne knew that too

much forgotten poet, Gerald Massey, and writes sympathetically of him and his work; he has interesting views on "best sellers," and writes entertainingly of "Some Unfinished English Novels," of "Gilbert Without Sullivan," and other matters that appeal to the reader and lover of books. His is the easy, familiar gossip of a man who is at home in the world of books and knows how to pass on to others something of the pleasure he has found there.



Mr. John L. Carter,
whose new novel, "Educating a Husband," is
published by Messrs. Chambers.

A new publishing firm, the Diamond Press Limited, which has just established itself at 10, Adam Street, Adelphi, has issued its first book, a novel, and is following it with other novels, with books for children and works in general literature. This first novel is "The Jade Rabbit," by Adele Blood and Tam Marriott, a sensational tale of adventure and intrigue with an Oriental setting, for which Miss Blood's collaborator, Mr. Marriott, who has made his home in China for more than thirty years, is partly responsible. Miss Blood first became known as an actress in the allegorical play, "Everywoman"; she at one time acted as a reporter in California on the San Francisco *Chronicle*. Three years ago she took her own repertory company to the Orient and, opening in Honolulu, played in Japan, Shanghai, Kong-Hong and in other Eastern places, including Burma and India. "The Jade Rabbit" has been dramatised, and is to be produced in London, probably with Miss Blood herself taking the part of the adventurous woman of the story, Miss Blake.

BOOKMAN.

NOTES ON NEW BOOKS.

The eighth volume of the new edition of "Chambers's Encyclopædia" (20s.; Chambers) brings this admirable dictionary of universal knowledge down to the beginnings of the letter S. The list of its contributors, eminent in art, science, literature, politics, sociology, theology, and in other walks of learning and of life, is an ample guarantee of the ability and reliability with which the work has been done. The biographical articles, varying in length with the importance of their

subjects, are models of conciseness and amplitude of information. Or take at random such a subject as "Periodicals," and you have in a column and a half as full and up-to-date a survey of the rise and progress of periodical literature as is necessary for all practical purposes; or such a subject as "Prisons," and you are given a careful and exhaustive account of our prisons, prison systems and reforms which fills over nine pages; nearly three times as much space is allotted to a lucid, scientific study of "Respiration" and for an example in the art of economising words turn to the excellent essay which offers

all the essential history of "Pre-Raphaelitism" in a couple of pages. Here is information, in half a dozen lines or in an article long enough to make a small book by itself, on practically everything under the sun, supplemented with illustrations and serviceable maps. When the two remaining volumes have completed it, nobody could wish for a more enlightening or more interestingly written reference book than this all-inclusive Encyclopædia.

Vol. IV of "British Birds," by Archibald Thorburn (16s.; Longmans), is now to hand. This completes the very handsomely produced edition of this author's standard work, hitherto only obtainable at a much higher price. This volume contains the Index for the whole edition.

"The House of Sin," by Allen Upward (7s. 6d.; Faber & Gwyer), is another "Tarleton" detective novel by the author of "The Domino Club," and provides a well-clothed murder mystery with many thrills. Dr. Tarleton, Home Office expert, who studies poisons in the calm shadows of the British Museum and hounds down crime in the more exciting outside world, is summoned in the early hours to the Duke of Altringham's mansion in Belgravia. He discovers the body of a stranger, killed by a mysterious Nigerian drug. Page by page the reader watches Dr. Tarleton unravelling a web of intrigue, scandal and sudden death. Sherlock Holmes generally told Watson when he had thought the problem out. Dr. Tarleton has no Watson to puzzle. One discusses and accompanies step by step

to the *dénouement*, almost entirely in his confidence. The mystery is a well-kept secret until less than twenty pages of the end. Altogether "The House of Sin" is a notable addition to its particular class of fiction. For suspense and variety of interest, clever character study, atmosphere, construction, pleasant style, a gripping story it would be impossible to overpraise a book the most blasé will hail with delight.



**Meredith's Chalet
from the Lawn of Flint Cottage.**

From a photo by Mr. Fred Turner, who conducted the Bookman Circle ramble to Box Hill and wrote the report of the event which appeared in our November Number.

THE BOOKMAN SPECIAL COMPETITION.

FORTY-FIVE POUNDS FOR SHORT STORIES.

THE BOOKMAN offers for the three best short stories three prizes of £20, £15, and £10 on the following conditions:

(1) All stories submitted must be original and unpublished.

(2) No story may be more than 2,000 words in length.

(3) MSS. should be typed.

(4) No competitor may send more than two stories.

(5) Competitors may use a pseudonym, but his or her real name must also be on the MS., and will be printed in the event of a prize being awarded.

(6) The Competition is open to all writers of English in all parts of the world.

(7) MSS. should be addressed to the Editor of THE BOOKMAN, and "Short Story Competition" written on the envelopes in which they are sent.

(8) The Editor's decision shall be final.

All MSS. must reach the office of THE BOOKMAN not later than February 15th next, and results will be announced and the Prize stories and a selection of the others printed in next April Double Number of THE BOOKMAN.

THE BOOKMAN LITERARY CIRCLE.

LONDON.

The meeting of the Bookman Literary Circle at the United Services Institution on Friday, November 12th, demonstrated the esteem in which Mr. Compton Mackenzie is held by many, for it had been convened at a few days' notice. The lecture had been announced for a subsequent date, but Mr. Mackenzie had to be in London earlier than he had expected. The large hall was completely filled. The Editor of THE BOOKMAN took the Chair, and Mr. Mackenzie's talk, which was on the subject of the Books of Childhood, was mainly autobiographical. He spoke not only of first loves, but of first hates in reading, and said he thought it was not necessary to exercise too close a supervision as to the reading of classics by children. If a book was great it would exercise its charm, and what was not comprehended would be dismissed, as many adult readers skip long descriptions to get to the action. He himself had read Smollett's "Roderick Random" twenty times as a child and "Don Quixote" nearly as many. He spoke of the charm that pictures have for children; the power to thrill and sometimes make afraid that many of the illustrations in old editions of the Bible and "Pilgrim's Progress" had on Charles Lamb and Robert Louis Stevenson were favourite instances. Mr. Mackenzie spoke specially of the charm that the illustrations to "Pickwick" had exercised on him, as he reached what he now thought were the supremely formative years between eight and ten. He spoke of his own sometimes lonely childhood, and dated his first imaginative flights and realisations from that period. At that stage of growth many children lived in loneliness of spirit, though surrounded by others, and it might be said that then were their inmost souls born. There was no doubt that nowadays children were more sophisticated and read the books of their elders before they were ready for them.

The subject was one that drew to their feet many members of the Circle who do not usually speak, and as the speeches were short and varied, a record number took part in the discussion. Mr. Trevor Blakemore, as a neighbour of Mr. Compton Mackenzie in the Channel Islands, said that his friend and himself had carried their boyish love of islands into manhood, and wondered how much of this had been due to the reading of "Robinson Crusoe" and the "Swiss Family Robinson." The discussion was carried on to the full limits of the time by Mr. Nairn, Mr. M. Hyam, Mrs. Heywood, Mrs. Burgin, Miss Ruth Cobb and many others.

On Wednesday, November 17th, Mr. C. Lewis Hind took the Chair for Sir Philip Gibbs, who spoke on "Journalism as the School for Novel Writing."

Sir Philip was provoked to many of his remarks, he said, by the statement of a critic in the *Westminster Gazette* that it was doubtful whether journalists excelled when they came to write fiction. He recalled that many of our greatest novelists had been journalists in their early impressionable days, and had built upon the sound foundations of acquaintance with life, accurate judgment, and the necessity of picturing vividly the scenes they had witnessed. Dickens brought a great deal of his knowledge and some of his technique from journalism—his experience as a reporter

helped him in his books enormously. The journalistic beginnings of Thackeray, Kipling, Barrie and Arnold Bennett were mentioned; and the greatest popular successes of to-day had been made by A. S. M. Hutchinson and Edgar Wallace, who began as journalists. The journalistic method was continually employed by H. G. Wells. Novelists who had not a wide experience of life were forced to rely on their imagination, but he thought that to give a lasting quality to what they write, writers must have first-hand experience in things. He himself had been accused of not being a novelist, but only a special correspondent. He regarded it as a compliment; not less, but more journalism would vitalise fiction. It was a pity that more novelists had not the courage to tackle the new problems caused by war and its after effects. Love was not enough, modern minds wanted more. War had altered the scale of peoples' minds—even old people had been changed by it, and triangular plots seemed small in the face of world movement. He had been for years all over Europe watching its effects on people, and had tried to tell something of this in books, not newspapers. We were waiting for novelists like Dickens to give us pictures of contemporary life, to show new ideas working out in people. The way was clear for really great novels. Sir Philip concluded a vividly interesting lecture with some remarks on the changing and improved status of journalists.

A very interesting discussion followed, in which Mrs. de Crespigny, Mrs. Blanckensee, Miss Nellie Tom Gallon, Miss Burton, Mr. Alfred Tresidder Sheppard, Mr. G. B. Burgin, Mr. Kennedy Williamson, Dr. Mullins, Mr. Cyril Gamon, Mr. Wildey Knight and others whose names did not transpire took part. The Chairman paid a tribute to Sir Philip Gibbs as journalist, novelist and speaker, and said that these activities did not mean that Sir Philip neglected friendship.

The members and friends of the London Bookman Literary Circle look forward to the Annual Conversazione and Dance as one of the great events of the season, and as the years go on the joy of meeting old friends and improving acquaintance with new ones increases. We met again at the Suffolk Galleries on Wednesday, December 1st, and were received by Mr. and Mrs. Robert Percy Hodder-Williams. The galleries form a pleasant setting for social gatherings, and by ten o'clock, when many had come on from the Authors' Club Dinner, they were pleasantly crowded. The piano solos of Miss Marion Keighley Snowden were much appreciated, and songs by Miss Daphne Goodman, Miss Helen Alston, Mr. Leo Barville, and the whistling solos by Mrs. H. A. Jones filled the pauses between the dances with increased pleasure. Mr. H. A. Jones was a most admirable M.C., and the secretary, Mrs. Sophie Hine, and the Editor of THE BOOKMAN are to be congratulated on the result of their well arranged programme. Among those present were Mr. Ernest Raymond, Mr. G. B. Burgin, Mr. C. E. Lawrence, Mrs. H. B. L. Webb (Mary Webb), Mrs. and Miss Almey St. John Adcock, Mr. William Bevan, of Glasgow, Mr. and Mrs. Cyril Gamon, Mr. Sidney H. Webb, Mrs. Marion St. John Webb, Mr. Patrick McGill, Miss Jane T. Stoddart, Mr. Cecil Palmer, Mrs. C. A. Nicholson.

F. A. D.

PROGRAMME.

1927.

January 5th.—Mr. Shaw Desmond: "The Irish Mind and the English." Chairman: Mr. Shan Bullock.

January 19th.—Mr. Frank Swinnerton: "Thoughts of a Publisher's Reader." Chairman: Editor of THE BOOKMAN.

MANCHESTER.

Dr. J. O'Reilly Somers delivered a fascinating lecture to the members on Tuesday, November 30th, on the great Italian author and dramatist, Pirandello. Monsignor Father Gonne was in the Chair.

Dr. Somers said Pirandello was to the modern stage what Shaw and Ibsen were to the drama at the time of their advent—he represented futurism. Barrie too is perhaps a forerunner of him in plays such as "Mary Rose," where the actual and the imaginary are blended. Pirandello describes himself as "a humorist." He portrays with sympathy the passions of mankind and presents them without prejudice. A humorist sees not only the man, but his shadow. Pirandello has been accused of insincerity—then he smiles. He knows that man cannot stand naked reality—he always builds round himself a field of fantasy. Dr. Somers gave a masterly résumé of three of Pirandello's plays, showing the genius of the dramatist in dissecting the soul of man.

Father Gonne, as the lecturer said, made an ideal chairman, but although he recognised Pirandello as a genius, he refused to be converted to his philosophy of life, in spite of Dr. Somers's strong advocacy.

On December 14th, the Manchester Bookman Circle held its annual supper which this year took the delightful form of a Christmas party under the supervision of the Chairman, Mr. Rowland Cragg. The evening commenced with a competition in which competitors were asked to guess the authors of about forty books; and on the list being examined the majority were fairly accurate, but some modern authors would have been flattered to find themselves credited with the production of certain classic works of the past. The prizes—a morocco-bound copy of "The Bookman Treasury of Living Poets," kindly presented by Mr. St. John Adcock, and the Christmas Number of THE BOOKMAN—were ably won by Mrs. Fleeson and Miss J. Taylor.

The speeches at the supper table were of a merry and impromptu nature. Twenty volunteers were each furnished with a sealed paper; and each in turn opened the paper and delivered an oration on the subject contained therein. The Circle may congratulate itself upon the wit and versatility of its members, for the subjects ranged from "the capability of this Circle to govern the British Empire," by way of the old Bacon-Shakespeare controversy, to "Should Cats be Taxed?"

After supper a quiet hour was spent in the reading of original literary compositions by members. Poems and sketches were read, and revealed the presence of talent among some members who have hitherto remained too modestly in the background. At the close of the evening all joined in the singing of Auld Lang Syne, and great was the spirit of comradeship that prompted this. Such an evening should be an inspiration to the Circle.

PROGRAMME.

1927.

January 11th.—"Members' Evening": Mr. Rowland Cragg. Chairman: Mr. Neville Cardus.

January 25th.—Rev. J. Bardsley Brash: "Don Quixote." Chairman: Professor J. A. Findley.

All applications should be made to the Secretary, Mr. J. H. Wharmby, Box 510, G.P.O., Manchester.

HASTINGS.

On Wednesday, November 3rd, Mr. Wallace Hills, of the *East Grinstead Observer*, gave a lecture on "The Bibliography of Sussex." In an intensely interesting paper he dealt with the literature of Sussex from the earliest times. He was able to tell us first hand about books and authors long forgotten, for he has in his library a collection of some 2,700 Sussex books. Mr. Hills answered some questions at the close of the meeting and showed copies of old and rare Sussex books to a very appreciative audience.

On Wednesday, November 17th, Mr. Maurice Marston, of the National Book Council, gave a talk on "Children's Reading." He dealt with the importance of juvenile literature, gave a list of twelve books that should be in every child's library and drew comparisons between modern children's books and those of fifty and sixty years ago.

On Wednesday, December 8th, Mr. St. John Adcock gave a lecture on "Dickens and the Victorian Woman."

PROGRAMME.

1927.

Wednesday, January 26th.—Major A. J. Dawson: "Queer Characters."

Wednesday, February 9th.—Mr. Michael Sadleir: "Anthony Trollope."

All applications should be made to the Secretary, Mr. Kenneth V. Saville, The Hastings Bookshop, 16, Robertson Street, Hastings.



The Four Riders of the Apocalypse.

From "The Book of Revelation." Edited by Ernest H. Short (Philip Allan).
Reviewed in this Number.

New Books.

ROBIN HOOD.

There are such strong dramatic qualities in the narrative poems of Mr. Alfred Noyes that I have wondered he has not before now developed this side of his gift and brought to the stage something of the spirit of romance, the poetry of thought and action and sense of character that went to the making of his "Tales of the Mermaid Tavern" and of the sequence of stories in his yet unfinished trilogy, "The Torch Bearers." But so far as I know he has only twice turned his hand to the art of the playwright. His second play, "Rada," appeared over ten years ago; and it is about twenty since he wrote "Sherwood," which was successfully produced in America, where it has been acted many times. He has now revised "Sherwood," re-named it "Robin Hood,"* and it is for the first time published over here, and will have been produced in London by Miss Lena Ashwell before these lines are in print.

In the glamorous tales and legends of the outlaw of Sherwood Forest Mr. Noyes has found the theme for a drama that is of imagination and fantasy all compact. Robin Hood, Little John, Friar Tuck, Will Scarlet, King Richard, Prince John, Maid Marian, the sinister Elinor—these and other men and women of the play are vigorously or graciously human; their names are familiar in our mouths as household words, they belong to history, or to tradition and to old ballads that have made them most convincingly real to us. Yet real as they may be, Robin and all his associates are dwellers on the shores of old romance; they belong as much to poetry as to common life, and Mr. Noyes has subtly blended these varying properties of dream and reality in the incidents and atmosphere of his drama. Robin is the hero of the under-dog, the friend of the poor, outlawed and deprived of his estate and Earldom of Huntingdon for stealing the king's deer, for robbing the rich on the highways, that he might relieve the hungry and the destitute with the fruits of his brigandage. The idyll of Robin's love for Marian runs through all the daring exploits of himself and his men, and touches the narrative with charm and tenderness, and at the close with tragedy; for it brings upon him the malice of Prince John, who had marked her down for his own, and of the Prince's sister, Elinor, whose love Robin had rejected.

Perhaps the most dramatic moments in the play are the escape of Robin from the room in the high tower in which he has been bricked up and left to die; the rescue of Will Scarlet from the gallows; the sudden return of King Richard from the Crusades, in time to restore Robin to favour and put an end, until too soon he sets out again for Palestine, to the tyrannical regency of Prince John; and the poignant, powerfully wrought scene in Kirklee Priory when Robin and Marian are done to death by the cunning hand of the woman who hates them both. But through and round all the story Mr. Noyes has woven an eerie, glimmering suggestion of gramarye. Shadow-of-a-Leaf, Robin's faithful attendant, who sacrifices his immortality in an effort to save him, is a delicate, Ariel-like figure having traffic between this world and the world unseen; the forest of Sherwood is dim with mystery and haunted by sprites and fairy creatures who have strange foreknowledge of things and touch the stories of Richard's crusade and of the passing of Robin and Marian with an exquisite spiritual significance.

I had marked passages for quotation from some of the dialogue and from some of the lyrics scattered through the play, but my space has gone in saying what I think of the general scope and fashion of it. Unlike most poetic plays, it has interest, action, dramatic movement as well as the charm of poetry; here and there the dramatist makes concessions to the poet, and the poet to the dramatist; and I can believe that, with its picturesque setting and its

* "Robin Hood: A Play in Five Acts." By Alfred Noyes. 5s. (Blackwood.)

changing elements of fantasy, robust romance, wild adventure, pathos and tragedy it should be even more entertaining and more impressive when seen on the stage than when read in the book.

ST. JOHN ADCOCK.

TWO GAELIC EXTRAVAGANZAS.*

Like the lyrics which Mr. Flower recently translated from the Irish poets of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries these two poems reflect nothing of the moody melancholy which it is usual to associate with Gaelic literature. Their authors, Merriman and Macnamara, were rebels against clericalism and puritanism. Merriman in particular was inspired by a turbulent paganism which was doubtless aggravated by the condition of his country:

"Her land purloined, her laws decayed,
Her wealth destroyed and her trust betrayed,
Her fields and pastures with weeds o'ergrown,
Her ground untilld and her crops unsown,
Her chieftains banished and an upstart band
Of hirelings holding the upper hand."

A real resentment then may have underlain what Mr. Yeats calls this "vital, extravagant, immoral, preposterous poem," the old resentment of a people which saw itself dwindling before the foreign invader, but could yet remember the days of its pride. But the style of the poem is wholly flippant, with a vernacular freedom of speech which doubtless explains its persistence in the memory of the countrymen of Clare and Munster down to our own day, but which may shock an urban taste. Its structure Mr. Yeats believes to have been founded on Swift's "Cademus and Vanessa." In both poems a fantastic court has been summoned to investigate why "Cupid has lost his art," or, as Merriman typically words it, why "the lads and lassies have left off breeding." The arguments are conducted with voluble country extravagance, but those who can stomach the poet's licence will enjoy its vitality. Macnamara's "Adventures of a Luckless Fellow" is less unique and of a more genial temper. It is a mock-epic, a sort of rambling parody of the "Æneid." But here, too, beneath the frivolity sounds the resentment of the dispossessed, who "groan under the usurper's yoke" and dream that:

"A hero shortly shall appear
Who'll make the Saxon curs look queer."

DR. BARRY: SCHOLAR AND DIVINE.†

When Madame de Chantal was asked to put on record her estimate of St. Francis de Sales after many years of intimate friendship, she dwelt upon his "gift of perfect faith, together with an exceeding clearness, decision, and perfect evenness of temperament." It is no exaggeration to say that these gifts reside in Dr. Barry and in nearly everything that he has written, so far as one remembers the output of forty years or so. This is all the more remarkable because from the first the mission he set himself was that of apologetics, and no apologist for the Roman Church is allowed, even in these days of comparative indifference, to forget that his failures and successes are alike obnoxious to many, especially to people who borrow her saints, copy her vestments, and cut up her ritual into smithereens.

Frankness one certainly expects from the audacious

* "The Midnight Comb" and "The Adventures of a Luckless Fellow." Two Poems translated from the Gaelic by Percy Arland Ussher. With a Preface by W. B. Yeats. Woodcuts by Frank W. Peers. 6s. (Jonathan Cape.)

† "Memories and Opinions." By William Barry, D.D. 10s. 6d. (Putnams.)

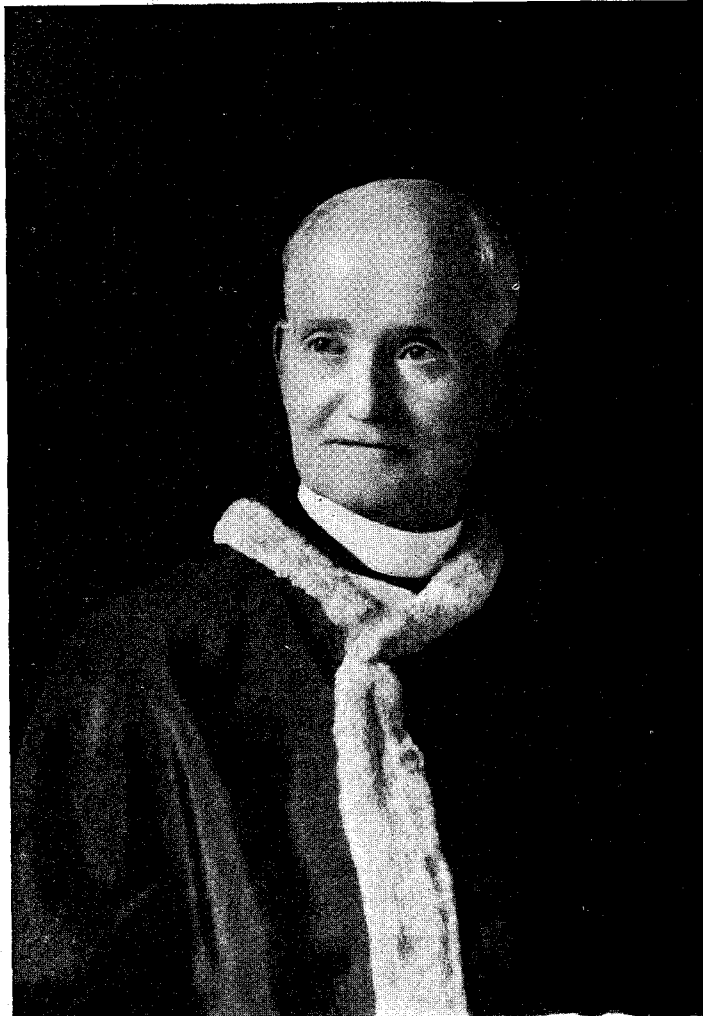
mind that launched itself in the 'eighties with "The New Antigone." As a philosophical romance, it ventured as far outside the Roman barriers as "John Inglesant" tried to invade them. It still remains remarkable that such a pair of masterpieces should have been produced by neighbouring Midlanders so diverse in their derivation and environment. But the points of difference were greater than any coincidence or similarity, for it has lately been shown that Shorthouse's novel was a delicate mosaic of citations from all kinds of ripe old sources, whereas Dr. Barry's work was stubbornly his own. Few were aware until the present autobiography appeared what a wide field of study Dr. Barry has covered, for the more a man approaches to universality, the more he lays himself open to judgment by piecemeal and by specialists. A retrospect like this therefore surprises by its variety of interest even those who have read many, or most, of Dr. Barry's books — history, biography, fiction, criticism, theology, and the rest — apart from his frequent contributions to the quarterlies and other reviews. Cardinal Gasquet is the nearest parallel that occurs to mind in this respect of literary industry, but the Cardinal has occupied himself chiefly with the history of a particular period. Dr. Barry has found time for his enormous tale of work in the midst of a busy life of parochial and other activities, and many sorts of missions. But the two scholars come together in this — that controversy has never embittered their genial spirit, and they have both revealed that genius for friendship which is the best of influences for mellowing old age.

London, Oscott, Rome, Dorchester, and Leamington mark the chief stages of a life that is now on the threshold of eighty, but there has been plenty of travel in between, and some of Dr. Barry's experiences in Greece and America show that a secluded life has not made him inaccessible in any way. Travel impressions have gone far to colour some of the best chapters in his romances, and here there is a refreshing open-mindedness in his recollections of many lands that makes them well worth commending to some of our flabby internationalists. He recalls his experiences during the Fall of Rome in 1870 without anything more than an urbane irony, and it was a truly European outlook that made his little book "The World's Debate" one of the memorable discussions on the inwardness and meaning of the Great War. As an Irishman he was asked to deliver two of the chief addresses on the centenary of his hero, Edmund Burke, and he has taken a share in some of the chief philosophical movements of his time. He has probably done more for theological progress by his moderation and self-control than his Modernist friends with their extreme views; and though he calls himself a metaphysician for

choice, he has been a humanist in the best sense of the term as well. He has written tolerantly of Renan and appreciatively of Heine, and his championship of Newman has never shaken his friendly relations with men like Dr. James Martineau, Sir James Marchant, or Dr. Gore, to mention only three of many eminent associates outside his own community.

It only remains to say that Dr. Barry is intensely popular among his co-religionists, and the tributes that were paid him on his golden jubilee three years ago are evidence of this. Nothing can be pleasanter than to add how much we junior contributors to the *BOOKMAN* have appreciated and enjoyed all that he has written in its pages. No wonder he teaches us to "rejoice healthfully," as St. Augustine says, for there is a persuasion in his literature as well as an edification in what he writes of religion, and what faculties could be more enviable in a versatile divine?

J. P. COLLINS.



Monsignor William Barry, D.D.

From "Memories and Opinions," by William Barry, D.D. (Putnams).

THE NEW IRELAND.*

A really just and impartial review of Mr. Béaslaí's volumes could be carried out only by the following method. The reviewer should go to Mars. He should take out naturalisation papers on the following day and transfer the volumes to a safe deposit. He should learn the Martian language; engage in Martian business; even

marry a Martian lady (strangling her instantly should she ever ask "Isn't there a place called Ireland on the earth?"); and become a hundred per cent. Martian of the truest type. After a twelve-month he should extract the book and read it with the detachment which only a year's sojourn away from this planet could allow. As this method is impracticable an honest reviewer must resolutely determine to view the volumes objectively and not subjectively. He must examine them purely as the biography of one of the most remarkable men of our era and as a noteworthy contribution to the history of our own times.

Taken as a whole, the work may be regarded, so to speak, as a loose *sortes* of which the initial premiss is contained in these words of Michael Collins himself: "English civilisation, while it may suit the English people, could only be alien to us. For us it is a misfit. It is a garment, not something within us. . . . Our internal life too has become the expression of the misfit of English civilisation. . . . English civilisation has made us into the stage Irishman, hardly a caricature. They destroyed our language, all but destroyed it, and in giving us their own they cursed us so that we have become its slaves. . . . We have to build up a new civilisation on the foundations

* "Michael Collins and the Making of a New Ireland." By Piaras Béaslaí. 2 vols. (Harrap.)

of the old." Further down in the syllogisms emerges the quotation from Mr. Shaw: "Nothing is ever done in this world unless men are prepared to kill one another if it is not done." And towards the end we will find that by January 31st, 1919, it was accepted by the Irish that a state of war existed between Ireland and England and that such state of war could never be ended until the English invader evacuated the country.

The above statements are all taken—though not in their actual sequence—from Mr. Béaslaí's pages, and he is honest enough to mention that he adopted the quotation from Shaw as his motto. If a reader has prejudged the case of Ireland *versus* England he will do well to leave this book unread, for it is written too soon after the events described in it, and too obviously from one point of view, to contain that calm and dispassionate survey of facts which the mind demands if it is to be turned into a court of appeal. If the reader has already decided that Ireland was right the volumes will not add to the strength of his conviction, and indeed may possibly weaken it. If he has made up his mind that Ireland was wrong Mr. Béaslaí's pages will inevitably strike him less as a judicial summing up than as a brilliant effort by counsel for the defence.

Of the two volumes the second appears to us immensely superior to the first. The first deals much less with Michael Collins than with the early stages of the formation of a New Ireland, and there are blocks of it from which the hero of the biography is completely absent. A case in point is the rather dull chapter on the opening of the first session of the Dail, a ceremony at which Mr. Collins was not present and on the proceedings of which he thus had no influence whatever. Again, there are several lengthy detailed accounts of escapes from prison in which Michael Collins was not directly or indirectly concerned. Frankly, these become wearisome and not less so because Mr. Béaslaí always makes a point of mentioning every single

individual in any way connected with these ventures. In this way many pages are loaded with unknown Micks and Barneys, Paddys and Seans who distract the attention of the author from the chief actor in the piece and make parts of this volume resemble nothing so much as "Phil the Fluter's Ball" in prose.

In the second volume Mr. Béaslaí rises to a much higher level. He writes with more concentration and with more restraint. This volume contains the most terrible part of the whole story, but even the most biased reader will see and commend the author's effort to hold the scales evenly and to write less as a propagandist and more as an historian. The era dealt with includes the appearance on the scene of the Black and Tans and Auxiliaries; the terrible reprisals; the truce and the treaty; and the subsequent split amongst the Irish themselves. In this volume Michael Collins is the dominating spirit. He is the actor who fills the stage. His courage, his insouciance, his breadth of vision and his extraordinary genius are revealed in every chapter. His tragic end is well told, with pathos, simplicity and dramatic intensity.

From a military point of view there is considerable interest in the admission made in the second volume that, just before Mr. Lloyd George's suggestion for a truce, a deputation from the Irish military leaders in the South had made it clear to the Irish G.H.Q. that lack of ammunition would preclude further hostilities. Of interest too is the disintegrating effect of a truce upon guerrilla troops. It is to this relaxation of effort, as well as to the rise of "truce heroes" with guns, that Mr. Béaslaí attributes much of the trouble which led to the subsequent fratricidal warfare between the Dail troops and the Irregulars. Of interest too, though of a lighter kind, is the facsimile of a letter from Captain X.Y. of the British Intelligence Service to a colleague at the War Office. It contains one "howler" in spelling. Either Mr. Béaslaí has not noticed this or is too polite to refer to it.

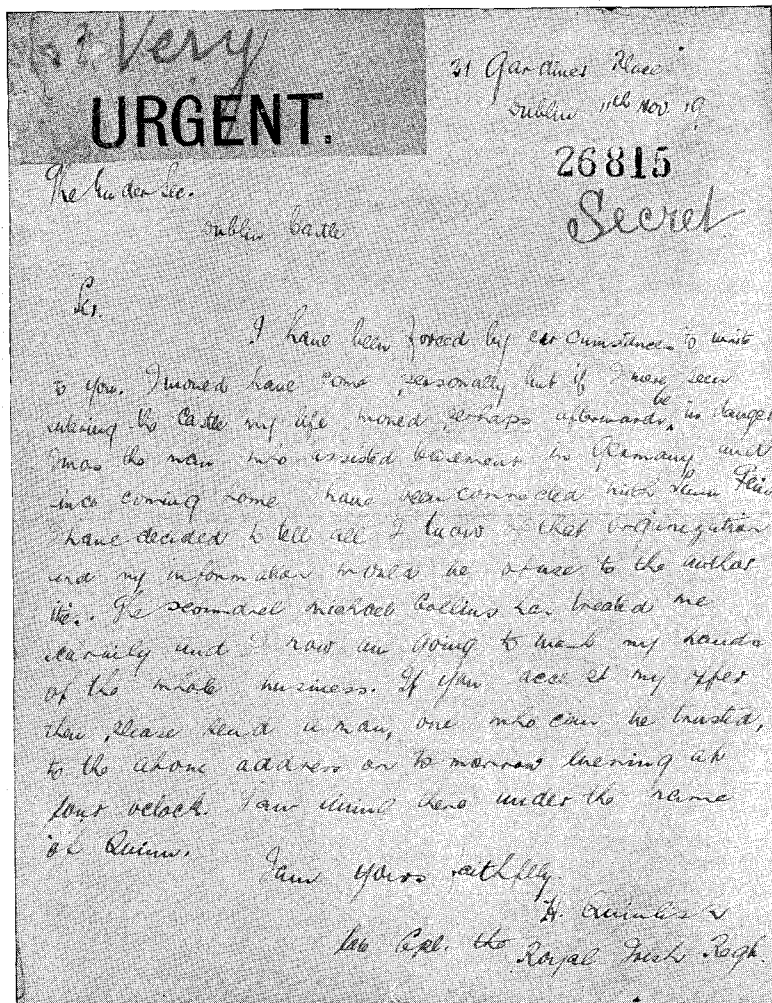
Emphatically "Michael Collins" is a book to be read—provided always that the reader will school himself to believe—what is true—that the author is a type of thousands of Irishmen who for an ideal faced, and in many cases suffered, imprisonment and death. Equally emphatically it is not a book for elderly die-hards, with a family history of apoplexy, after a heavy meal.

F. E. WHITTON
(Lieut.-Colonel).

THE RICHMOND STOCK.*

Mrs. Stirling's skilful management of her material has made this volume rich and readable from board to board. It was to have been, one might say, an autobiography of the son in honour of his father. The life of Sir William Richmond, who died in 1921 within a few months of eighty years, was for over fifty of them overlapped by that of George Richmond, who was born in 1809. Between them, the two Royal Academicians, bound in life and memory by very strong ties of affection and admiration, contributed to a century of English interests, artistic and social. Their individual shares in this, with the son's acknowledgment of the father's inspiration, was the subject of Sir William's "Recollections," written or jotted down from time to time during the seven years before his death. Owing to age and illness his reminiscences were discursive (as doubtless they should have been in his prime), incomplete, and partly transcribed in pencil, sometimes even

* "The Richmond Papers. From the Correspondence and Manuscripts of George Richmond, R.A., and his son, Sir William Richmond, R.A., K.C.B." By A. M. W. Stirling. 32s. 6d. net. (Heinemann.)



Facsimile of Letter from Quinlisk, the Informer.

From "Michael Collins and the Making of a New Ireland." By Pierce Beasley (Harrap).

illegible. They required much more than mere editing. But as they now emerge from Mrs. Stirling's hands, the various Richmond Papers comprehensively fulfil the filial intentions of the original author.

Their interest is that of character. Sir William Richmond, as everybody remembers, was a personality. He was eminent in his own profession for his opinions as well as for his practice. His activities were engaged far beyond it. "Richmond," said Watts to Leighton, "has more brains than all the rest of us put together," and there is perhaps little to regret in their not having been concentrated more upon his own particular job. This volume at any rate gains by the width of his interests. It displays him as the "great artist in life" which Professor Mackail has called him. Among its attractions are the separate chapters on Gladstone and Prince von Bismarck, and the occurrences of Ruskin, William Morris, Millais, Burne-Jones, and many more among his own "Recollections," all characteristically vivid and personal. None the less, these are only incidental. The essence of his personality, as Mrs. Stirling remarks, is to be found in another's. George Richmond is the prevailing figure in this book, as his son designed it should be. It is the Richmond stock which emerges as its chief interest.

There is something remarkably racy in the portrait of George Richmond among his friends presented here. With his roots deeply bedded in local soil, he flourished in wider achievement in an atmosphere still favourable to the nourishment of his individuality. One fancies his son was thinking of just this when, looking back on his own career as a failure, he lamented that his lines had not been laid in earlier, more congenial times, when he should not have been crippled by miscomprehension. The son had, in reality, only grown old in turn like his father, in whom, we are told, an almost morbid pessimism resided (and partly posed) along with a *joie de vivre* which Sir William likewise inherited. Yet it is impossible not to be aware of some quality of circumstance and character, now departed, in the circle of George Richmond and all his family as they are here introduced. It is something strong and native which belongs in common, we feel, to relationships as different as those between George Richmond and Ruskin and between George Richmond and Samuel Palmer.

The mention of Samuel Palmer brings me to the eminent interest of these Papers—the associations they revive of the Richmonds with William Blake, the Master of the father after whom the son was named. Palmer was Sir William's godfather, and among the most illuminating and graphic of the "Recollections" is the account of an escapade of young Richmond and Thomas More Palmer, who in their early teens sought a romantic escape from their homes in some sort of imitation of the spirit of their fathers and the other "Extollagers" (here called "Astrologers," by the way) at Shoreham a quarter of a century earlier. Of that ardent company of Blake's young disciples down in Kent—of Samuel Palmer and Edward Calvert, and their associates of kinds like John Linnell and John Giles—we hear much in these pages direct from George Richmond, who himself was of it. As it happens, at the moment when these "Richmond Papers" appear, an exhibition at the Victoria and Albert Museum is bringing belated public recognition to their beautiful art, and the remarkably interesting, intimate contributions to the catalogue by Samuel Palmer's son, Mr. A. H. Palmer, ought not to be missed by any whom the portrait of George Richmond in this volume may attract.

D. S. MELDRUM.

CHOSEN POEMS.*

Mr. Douglas Ainslie is a fortunate man. His "Chosen

* "Chosen Poems." By Douglas Ainslie. 7s. 6d. (Hogarth Press.)



Floating to freedom on our big raft.

From "On the Trail of the Unknown," by G. M. Dyott (Thornton Butterworth).

Poems" is published by the Hogarth Press in a particularly charming form, although his work is neither so modern nor so experimental as much issued from that house. It enjoys also the advantage of an introduction by Mr. G. K. Chesterton, and if the "kindly godfather" at times seems to criticise by silence, yet the measure of his praise is both exact and deserved. The contents of Mr. Ainslie's volume are drawn from previous books of verse now out of print, together with some collected poems and others here printed for the first time. Obviously it is the work of a man of culture who has read the books that count, has considered the subjects that matter and visited many places rich with human associations or in natural beauty.

The subjects of Mr. Ainslie's poems derive from various languages and from widely separated periods. He is interested for instance in old legends, and in "Eve's Gift" relates how our common mother, when thrust from Paradise, plucked privily a tendril of the vine as she passed through the Gate.

"This planted Eve, this frond alone
Of the magical trees of Paradise;
On the River's bank is the first vine grown—
The grape wherein enchantment lies."

The story of Buddha, his renunciation and gospel, is narrated in rhymed couplets of considerable distinction. But, as is hinted by Mr. Chesterton in his preface, Mr. Ainslie seems most completely himself when dealing in ballad form with episodes of Scottish history and with Scottish national heroes. Wallace, Bruce and Douglas are rank of the soil, and nearer to his heart even than his Indian mystic. On these and many other subjects Mr. Ainslie writes excellent verse, happily turned, sincerely felt and wittily expressed. His undoubted qualities however do not seem sufficiently outstanding to entitle it to rank higher than this.

EUGENE MASON.

ALL SORTS AND CONDITIONS.*

"Where is the child with soul so dead" that it does not love the Swiss Family Robinson? Mr. George, before leaving us, wrote for our delight a fantasy of a similar nature, "Children of the Morning," and it were a pity to look a gift-book in the eye. Instead we should wish it the success of "The Blue Lagoon" and other fascinating faerie stories. Tales of people wrecked on a desert island have a peculiar attraction for human beings.

* "Children of the Morning." By W. L. George. (Chapman & Hall.)—"Dear Idiot." By M. Bryant. (Duckworth.)—"The Show Girl." By Thyra Winslow. (Knopf.)—"Queen's Mate." By Philip Macdonald. (Collins.)

In our far-off ape-like beginnings we must often have straddled a log and drifted from one little bit of land to the next. The earth has been mapped and we can discover no more islands which may prove to be continents. Nevertheless we like to dream of the untrodden, to fancy what we would do if the Atlantic sprouted new islands and it was our giddy fortune to drop to them from a passing hydroplane. Mr. George's version of the old story concerns the wrecking of some children on a deserted island which has the necessary nourishment—perennially bearing fruit trees—in readiness. The youngsters grow to maturity, they mate, they fight, but their great men, Dzon and Tsarl, are both in different ways failures, which is why "Children of the Morning," though infinitely better written, will never rival the old extravagant, goody-goody "Swiss Family Robinson" as a dream companion.

It is a pity that "Dear Idiot" is not more convincing, for it is written with a facile pen. The people of the story belong to "the county," and one brother allows himself to be mistaken for another brother in one of those silly scandals which nowadays, and to modern people, appear remote from life. Gabriel was going off for a night with the Vicar's pretty wife when a telegram reached his parental home recalling him to the bedside of his lawful spouse. His brother Gervaise rushed off to intercept him, and is left with the lady on his hands. It was raining, which was enough to make them spend afternoon, evening and night in the same inn! Quite absurd, of course. If it had blown a hurricane Gervaise would have trudged the three miles to the nearest village, sent a conveyance back for Mrs. Telford and washed his hands of the affair. Instead he remains and Mr. Telford presently arriving, believes the worst. Gervaise would have explained and gone on explaining until the parson grasped the facts, but oh no, not in "Dear Idiot." Instead the injured husband [*sic*] rushes home and hangs himself, and the noble Gervaise, still shouldering the blame, is ostracised by the old Paul Pry of the county, etc. Americans say we are extraordinarily sentimental, even morbid, over our love affairs, and if such stories as "Dear Idiot" were a picture of life this would be true.

They themselves are giving us at the moment some pieces of interesting literature, and "The Show Girl," by Thyra Winslow, is an example. Purged of all sentimentality and simply written, it belongs to the Sinclair Lewis school of fiction and, like other novels of that school, is lacking in beauty and vision. It etches carefully a convincing picture of a girl who, being a little more vital than the average small-town maiden, drifts into the beauty chorus of a variety show. Her adventures are bitten home with the acid of reality. Sympathy with her is subtly aroused, is strengthened by the natural unfolding of the tale, and the reader lays down the book with a feeling of satisfaction that this crude, commonplace little person should have acquired her millionaire and will live "happy ever after." Miss Winslow is to be congratulated on her achievement.

Why should the author of "Queen's Mate" have given us such a medley? This is not a novel, nor can it be said to be a book of short stories. A young American, whose millionaire father has married the heiress to one of the Balkan States, farcically asks seven of her suitors to compete for her hand, the prize to go to the one who can write the best short story. Is Mr. Macdonald giving publishers a hint? "For the best new novel—a well-dowered and handsome bride or bridegroom. Photographs to be seen at the office."

All that part of "Queen's Mate" which deals with "O Sophonisba, Sophonisba, O" is written to the tune of "the sudden enrichment of colour in her silken cheek." In other words the author has his tongue in his cheek, for, amazing as it may seem, Mr. Philip Macdonald can write. He can write so vigorously, so emotionally, so tensely, that he ought to drop all that nonsense of "face of angelical evil with its faintly dusky skin, vivid lips and flame-kissed eyes"; and primroses "like an irregular splash of ethereal gold; gold without gold's coarseness; like the soul of what gold may stand for but so rarely

does." He knows perfectly well that gold is a beastly meretricious colour, and that primroses are a very pale yellow. What is more, with his gifts, he can afford to shame that devil of the cheap and obvious, for in this pinchbeck are set seven diamonds, and the best of them, "His Mother's Eyes," is one of the finest short stories of the day—and probably of any day. "The Coster" gave a glimpse of its author's quality. "The Roman Matron" made you feel sorry there were only seven stories. "The Cup of Glory" rendered you oblivious of time and place, and when you had read "His Mother's Eyes" you put down the book with that feeling of satisfaction which only comes when you have stumbled on a masterpiece. In the rush of the mediocre this story stands out like Saul the son of Kish among the Israelites. I am only afraid lest being, as I said before, set in pinchbeck, this remarkable piece of writing should miss the notice and appreciation which it deserves.

C. A. DAWSON SCOTT.

EXPERIENCES OF A LITERARY MAN.*

Some weeks ago, *The Irish Statesman*, that admirable journal which a great Irishman, George Russell, edits so worthily, made indignant comment that the remarkable series of European honours recently awarded to Shaw, Yeats, James Stephens, Sean O'Casey and Liam O'Flaherty, had gained small if any notice from the Dublin press. The latest tribute to Irish authorship, it would appear, got just five lines of grudging announcement in one metropolitan paper. A testimonial to a retired publican, said the *Statesman*, would have had ribbon head-lines, portraits and an interview. Had Irish prize-fighters triumphed to the extent that Irish literary talent has won recognition in Europe—two awards of the Nobel prize, the Hawthornden prize, and so on—the news would have reverberated through the world. But Dublin makes its own universe.

There are reasons for this lamentable state of Irish things, and some of them you may find hinted at, or implied, if not actually stated, in this book of experiences by another Irish author who, had he been pure English, pure Scots, or French even, would long ago have been among the international elect with Shaw, Yeats and Synge; and in his own country and city would have won the honours seemingly reserved for politicians and their kind. But Stephen Gwynn is what Dublin calls Anglo-Irish. He has been to Oxford. He writes in English, the tongue that Swift, his master and model, employed. Most of his best work has been written in London and published there; and of him it is true, as of almost every other Irishman who turns to letters for profession, fame or livelihood, that had he, for sake of the land he loves, forsaken Anglo-Irishism for Irishism he might have abandoned letters or starved. Of Ireland he writes with abundant justification: "There never was a harder country for a literary man to make his living out of: and the trait follows our people to America where they are comparatively well off and furnish their houses with everything—except books." That is not written as a reproach but as truth. It is a reproach, nevertheless, and of it some day Ireland will be ashamed.

Stephen Gwynn tells, in this good book, that he was brought up to think himself Irish, without question or qualification; but the new nationalism thinks otherwise, and even "A. E." calls Gwynn the typical Anglo-Irishman. He does not protest, save to say—and he might well boast concerning it—that he is never so much at home as in Ireland, loves no country so well, and for it and its dear people has worked devotedly through a life wherein work has never been easy, and maybe at times has been difficult to an extent not revealed in this book. Even in Oxford things did not go on wheels. It mattered nothing that he was "grandson of William Smith O'Brien, the rebel of

* "Experiences of a Literary Man." By Stephen Gwynn. 21s. (Thornton Butterworth.)

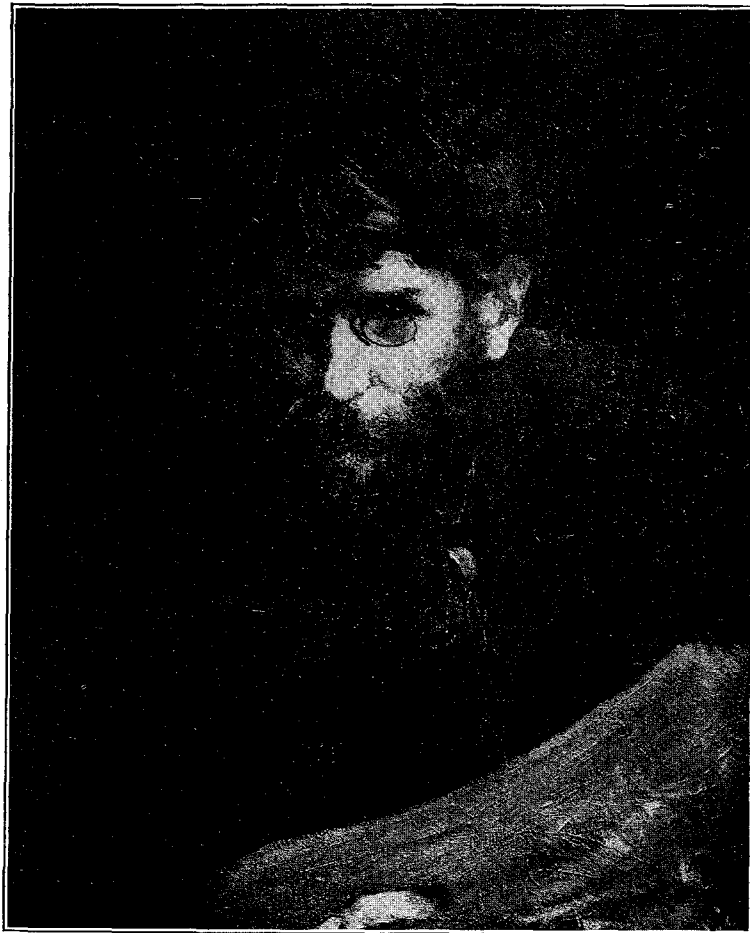
1848—and lineal representative of Brian Boru, King of Thomond, who defeated the Danes and made himself King of Ireland": or perhaps it did matter. At all events, his Oxford career seemingly was strewn more with honours than with roses, and at close of it, for this born writer, this typical Anglo-Irishman, was nothing but the long routine of schoolmastering. Say that the routine was tempered by much reading of his master, Swift, and others, by travel, fishing, cricket, politics, family matters, by the company of a troop of friends—Irish, French, English—by sight and hearing of Ruskin, Pater, Morris, Andrew Lang, Hewlett, Stephen Phillips and many more herein vividly recalled, by excursions into letters that at last inevitably became residence: admit all that and then consider what for Ireland and himself it would have meant if, instead of writing "free lance journalist I began and free lance I remained," Gwynn had been able pridefully to proclaim as his greatest experience the complete, absolute service to Ireland that it is very sure he was called to and longed passionately to give? His service, as it is, as you shall find in this book—so full of good meat, so engrossing on every page, so lucidly written and in a manner that Swift himself would extol—that service is great. Perhaps no other Irishman knows his country so well. Certainly none has written more or better concerning it. History, poetry, fiction, essays, topography, even propaganda, Gwynn has worked for Ireland in many fields, and always faithfully. Most of those named in his book know that, or knew it; and others whom he does not name bear the like witness. It will be a good day for Irishmen, "without question or qualification," when the recognition and honour due to men of his quality are not sectionally begrudged but nationally awarded.

Irrespective of all that, one must dispute Stephen Gwynn's judgment that he began and remains a free lance journalist. His wonder that it should be so is pure illusion—hardly genuine illusion. At heart he knows better. The man, whether he be Anglo-Irish or not, who aspires to making a livelihood by his pen must write journalism in some form, be that form higher or lower. Even Swift wrote it, and Defoe, and Thackeray, and Dickens, and Arnold, and Pater, and Stevenson; whilst among the moderns there can be only a handful of poets who resist the lure of Fleet Street. Contributing to the big reviews, to *Blackwood*, to *Cornhill*, the *Spectator* and the old *Saturday*, does not make a man a journalist. Some of Gwynn's best work appeared in such places, and elsewhere in due time. Some of his journalism, so called, appears now as experiences, not of a journalist but of a literary man. That is the fitting phrase: Literary man. The man who wrote the *Life of Moore* is no journalist. "The Old

Knowledge" is not journalism by far. Neither is "The History of Ireland," a book that easily might be its author's monument. Neither is that book of collected poems, "that seem to me worth more than all my unnumbered writings in prose." Neither is that delectable story, "the only good piece of fiction I ever wrote, the story of a witch's curse and a flood": a story, by the way, which, if editors knew their work, would be in any collection of the very best. Then what does Gwynn

mean, or imply, by saying that Colvin and others valued his writing and critical judgment? Why does he boast that "when verse is concerned, nothing is going to shake my confidence in my own judgment. You might as well argue with a tea taster." Why does he rank "The Cigarette Maker's Romance" among "the best pieces of imaginative work in modern fiction"? And why does he assert, "absolutely and securely," that he stands by his early estimate of the genius of Stephen Phillips? Journalists, even if they be free lances, do not write and talk like that. Nor do they at long last or ever sit down and write such a book as this, without a bad page in it or an uninteresting one, no gush or mawkishness, no writing down, but a fine high level of mind and style from beginning to end.

SHAN BULLOCK.



"A. E."

From "The Experiences of a Literary Man," by Stephen Gwynn (Thornton Butterworth).

FATHER AND SON.*

Two books with the signature of Ludovici come to hand by the same delivery. The father, A. Ludovici, tells the story of his career as a painter in "An Artist's Life in London and Paris"; the son, Anthony M. Ludovici, tells all he knows about the female sex in "Woman: A Vindication."

Seniores priores. The elder Ludovici must have precedence, if only by reason of the fact that he probably knows more of the world than his offspring. These reminiscences are excellently written. They are not disfigured by those stock anecdotes so familiar in personal retrospects. There are a few stories in the record, some of them not new, but Mr. Ludovici is entitled to use them since he heard them at first hand.

The book has a real value in the panorama of life it unfolds and in its quite sound criticism of schools of painting from the author's boyhood to the present day. This generation cannot fail to be amused by Mr. Ludovici's memories of the early sixties and of the dress and habits of the period, and by his description of what kind of a man James MacNeill Whistler really was. Whistler emerges from the examination with considerable credit.

* "An Artist's Life in London and Paris." By A. Ludovici. 12s. 6d. (Fisher Unwin.)—"Woman: A Vindication." By Anthony M. Ludovici. 7s. 6d. (Constable.)

There are fine pages, too, about Puvis de Chavannes, Rodin, Manet, Alma Tadema, Joseph Pennell, Sir John Lavery and other celebrities in the art world of yesterday and to-day. The author displays considerable catholicism in his appreciation of divergent artistic schools, and has even a good word of sorts to say for the Futurists.

The younger Ludovici in "Woman: a Vindication" will arouse the fierce wrath of any thoroughgoing Feminist who peruses its somewhat daring pages. The subject of the work is to prove that woman's only occupation in life is as wife and mother, or even mistress and mother. It annoys the author to think that girls should be engaged in industrialism or that women should be immersed in the professions or arts. With sorrow he envisages a future in which females will be bishops, judges and cabinet ministers: "But by the time this comes about, if it should come about, it is to be hoped that the influence of Anglo-Saxon and Teutonic countries will have sufficiently declined in the world for their example to be no more than a signboard, a warning and a danger-signal, to inform other nations of the fatal peril of following in their wake." Mr. Ludovici Junior rightly enough assumes that the Latin countries will be safe for some centuries at least from any increase of women-spheres outside the home.

One thing Mr. Ludovici does recognise and applaud in woman, and that is "capacity for single-minded devotion to her own offspring." He marks her as high for this as he would a beast or a bird. If there are any fighting Suffragettes left in Great Britain they will turn and rend this disheartening "Vindication" to shreds.

LOUIS J. MCQUILLAND.

ALPHA AND OTHERS.*

No small part of the interest of a book of personal studies is derived from the insight gained of its author, his likes and dislikes. Mr. Gardiner is affectionately admired by all who really know him, and a great part of his charm comes from the fact that he has positive views of persons and things, and does not mind saying what they are. His impression of life is somewhat acidulously humane. He can prick a fool as well as anybody, and is more eager than most to champion the poor and the down-trodden; so that, as is expected of an ex-editor of the *Daily News*, he is certainly on the side of the angels, or at least of those angels who have possibly a touch of the spirit of Nonconformity about them. Yet he is warmly human (as we who know and love him are aware); he can make mistakes and even indulge a prejudice or two. This book, his latest addition to what will become a notable series, is excellently revealing of himself as well as of those, its subjects, whom he pelts with bricks and roses.

In these sketches he claims "to present some of the tendencies of the time in the terms of the personalities which embody those tendencies. The studies are not only portraits, but portents." But is that so? I think not. It is rather a social fidgetiness than broad tendencies that are illustrated by the thirty-seven persons who are brought into this volume, and as for the portents, it is not the first swallow that makes a summer, any more than Mr. Amery or "Jix"—we take what we feel would be Mr. Gardiner's favourite examples—are to be accepted as lords who really rule the storm. No, let us have none of the panjandrum business. Dean Inge, and Charlie Chaplin, Mr. Smillie and Jack Hobbs, Chicherin and Lord Rothermere, are amusing subjects for "Alpha's" brilliant powers of analysis; but, with all respect, are they more than over-grown butterflies drifting on the winds of the passing day? Portents are apt to be portentous, and the pity is that nobody really portentous nowadays exists on whom Mr. Gardiner can whet his quill. Those who really govern these times and the politicians, are not the head-line people but the nice, conventional folk who pay their rates and taxes, possibly with difficulty but yet

* "Certain People of Importance." By A. G. Gardiner. 12s. 6d. (Jonathan Cape.)

without complaint, who live in the similar houses of similar streets, and who think that wireless entertainers are entertaining. The giants went out with Mr. Gladstone's last speech.

This is a pleasant book. Even those who stand in Mr. Gardiner's pillory must recognise the enjoyment he gives to others. It was, however, not kind of him to use for frontispiece this saturnine photograph of Dean Inge, after the Dean, who is infinitely better than ever he was painted, publicly offered him a less unflattering portrait of himself: yet what does it matter? The Dean will be the first to comfort himself with the knowledge that in the world that he knows and says is drifting to horrid ruin and red perdition, with cathedrals crumbling and the newspapers black with clerical journalism, nothing will long remain for the sun to gloat upon. So what matters the violence of this Mephistophelian aspect of the humorous Dean, any more than his warts mattered to the great Oliver: who indeed was at once a personage and a portent. Let us however not seem to belittle Mr. Gardiner's book. It is written with searching insight, frequent humour and a chiselled charm of phrase. He is able deftly to touch the palpable absurdities of the time, as when he shows how Miss Royden, who has a spiritual and religious message to deliver, is forbidden to speak in pulpits of the Church she was born into, when the world is sick of ecclesiastical commonplace and the anæmic voices of the curates. There is plenty of scope and opportunity for Mr. Gardiner's trenchant powers: yet the time has come when without neglecting such studies as these he should follow up his *Life of Sir William Harcourt* with another serious book; a *History of the Reign of Edward the Seventh*, or the sad story of the decline and fall of Liberalism.

C. E. LAWRENCE.

MR. SWINNERTON'S NEW NOVEL.*

It is often complained that the psychological novel is deficient in plot or incident, while the novel in which the story is the main thing is apt to be weak in character. Mr. Swinnerton has therefore achieved a rare triumph in "Summer Storm." He has written a novel that is psychological enough to please the most "modern" of readers, but at the same time he has given us a story which, if it has not a great deal of actual incident, has at least a strong thread of mystery running through it—mystery not of the superficial "shocker" order, but of a far more human and absorbing kind. He has moreover succeeded in producing a novel which, while essentially "up to date" in form and style, is yet old-fashioned in substance, and which, though realistic in method, is idealistic in tendency. In none of Dickens's stories—and there are not a few hints of Dickens in "Summer Storm"—is virtue more completely vindicated in the end, or evil more surely frustrated.

Though his skill has made it quite new, Mr. Swinnerton has chosen the most conventional of plots. Reduced to its elements, "Summer Storm" is the story of the rivalry between two girls for one man's love. Beatrice Gayner and Polly Lane, two vividly contrasted characters, are fellow workers in a typewriting office. One day their employer, Miss Abel, dies suddenly on returning from lunch. By their reactions to this calamity the qualities of the two girls are immediately suggested. Polly, though stricken with grief and fright, coolly telegraphs for a doctor and for Miss Abel's brother, while Beatrice, who had none of Polly's love for her employer, merely gives way to hysterics. As soon, however, as the corpse of Miss Abel is removed from sight, Beatrice recovers herself and, to Polly's disgust, enters into immediate negotiations for acquiring the business, with Polly as junior partner.

On the same eventful day, Henry Falconer appears in the office. Falconer is a sensitive, kindly man of over forty, a little weak of will, but of virtuous if not strong character. Early orphaned, he had passed years of poverty and struggle as a strolling actor before an unexpected

* "Summer Storm: A Study in Contrasts." By Frank Swinnerton. 7s. 6d. (Hutchinson.)

bequest made him a gentleman of independent means. In his younger days he had met Beatrice, then down on her luck, and befriending her out of pity, would have married her but for his discovery that she was not merely married already, but was another man's mistress. Meeting him again after some years, Beatrice, selfish, unscrupulous and cunning, determines to win Falconer, with whom she is sensually infatuated; and the fact that Falconer is obviously in love with the simple, spontaneous, generous Polly, gives but the keener edge to her purpose. So long as her husband is known to be alive, Beatrice realises that she has no chance of attaining her end. How she sets about ridding herself of her entanglements and of outwitting Polly, but how Polly finally emerges triumphant, is described by Mr. Swinnerton with subtle delineation of character and much alert and charmingly intimate description; while excitement is added to the story by reason of the fact that Falconer's early relations with Beatrice are left a matter for mysterious conjecture until almost the last chapter.

A special word of gratitude is due to Mr. Swinnerton for his delightful picture of Polly's family and home. We are sick to death of the mocking or patronising attitude of the "intellectuals" towards suburbia. Mr. Swinnerton, in this intensely human and sympathetic novel, has dealt such snobbishness a powerful blow.

GILBERT THOMAS.

EVERYDAY LIFE—1820-1920.*

That the years between 1820 and 1920 were "wonderful years" for England and for the world in general there can be no shadow of doubt. Look where we will—in the realms of science, philosophy, literature, art, sociology or education—the century is notable for a remarkable efflorescence, to which our own country contributed some of the choicest blooms. The writer who attempts to survey such a period, either generally or in any of its aspects, should be endowed with no common powers of selection and synthesis. The elements which form the groundwork of such a study are so numerous and diverse, and the literature is so copious, that a sense of values, a power of deciding the relative importance of the various factors, is here more definitely indispensable than in any other form of literature. A few ripe scholars, like Mr. F. S. Marvin, possess in eminent degree this synthetic faculty, which does not fail them even when they undertake to distil the essence of a crowded century. Having once experienced the joys of this intellectual champagne, one is apt to be a little disappointed with the small beer which is more often served.

Yet if only the label on the bottle correctly describes the contents, we do at least know what to expect. Mrs. Peel's title seems to promise a fairly comprehensive account of manners and ways of life (presumably in England) during the last hundred years, but the author's scope is in reality much narrower. She has read a good deal, but not always with discrimination, and the material is ill-digested. A large portion of the book consists of quotations (all duly acknowledged) from other books. Having performed her research, Mrs. Peel has not been able to absorb the works of others and produce a reasoned and coherent history, coloured by her own theories and her own feelings. Her book is lacking in the Aristotelian *desiderata*, a beginning, a middle and an end. Her chapter on education is innocent of any allusion to the theories of Pestalozzi and Froebel, of Arnold and Newman. She touches lightly on birth-control without mentioning Malthus. The teachings of Bentham and the other Utilitarians, of Ruskin, of Morris, of Karl Marx, which directly and indirectly played so great a part in forming the social and political ethics of to-day, are passed by in silence. There is a short paragraph on the influence of Darwin and Huxley in lessening public respect for dogma, but small appreciation of the rapid secularisation of thought which has enabled the British public to

read Herbert Spencer and Swinburne (not to speak of Mr. Hardy, Mr. Shaw and Mr. Wells) without forfeiting its respectability.

Of course Mrs. Peel did not set out to write a history of thought, but of the minor morals and manners; yet in their due time the ideas of theorists and artists bear fruit in this realm, and cannot be ignored as highly important formative influences. The neglect of these factors in the present work is the more strongly emphasised by the extraordinary *naïveté* of some of Mrs. Peel's pronouncements on questions of cause and effect. Writing of the period round about 1900, she startles us with this astonishing conjecture:

"... It is, perhaps, to Miss Margot Tennant and to the bicycle that we owe the social emancipation of the young girl. . . ."

Almost as remarkable are some of the descriptions of present-day life. After outlining the practice of the Victorians in such-and-such a matter, Mrs. Peel has a habit of finishing off her paragraph with a short account of our current procedure, and here she achieves only a platitudinous banality. Thus:

"To-day electric light is found in almost all houses belonging to well-to-do people, and in urban shops and public buildings. Electric current is also used to a smaller extent for heating and cooking."

The most valuable and suggestive portions of the book are those which retail accounts given personally to the author by old people casting their minds back to the days of their childhood. A number of interesting private letters are presented, and the verbal descriptions are reproduced in a spirited manner which successfully conveys not only an impression of the period but the personal idiosyncrasies of the narrator. Mrs. Peel's selected passages from memoirs, though too copious, are always relevant and help to fill in the detail. These are supplemented by original anecdotes, many of which are amusing and give a close view of certain aspects of everyday life in the nineteenth century. Woman-like, she devotes considerable space to the ways and peculiarities of servants. Fashionable life in the West End and in the country houses contrasts with the abject misery of the poor, the stories of want and destitution being often heartrending. Middle



Head-piece by David Jones.

For "Fleet Street," a poem by Shane Leslie. Additional No. to the New Broad-sides. (Poetry Bookshop.)

* "A Hundred Wonderful Years." Social and Domestic Life of a Century, 1820-1920. By Mrs. C. S. Peel, O.B.E. With 70 illustrations. 15s. (John Lane.)

class life stands out less vividly, but this may be explained by the comparative lack of data; for the middle classes seldom write memoirs, and are not made the object of commissions and investigations by social students.

The illustrations, from prints, photographs and silhouettes, are excellently selected, and cover a wide field, including fashions, sports, social assemblies, vehicles and decoration. The most delightful of all is a plate reproduced from "The Proper Deportment of Schoolboys," showing two well-dressed young prigs in the act of being "affable and condescending" (according to the precepts of the primer), while a country lad with bared head dutifully pulls his forelock!

The repulsion which is aroused in the modern mind by the snobbery of our grandfathers and great-grandfathers is perhaps as good an index as any to the spiritual progress we have made in the century 1820-1920. There is still far too much snobbery, but it has become somewhat furtive and apologetic, and no longer stalks among us unashamed, as it so patently did among the ancestors whom Mrs. Peel calls up before our astonished gaze.

HERBERT B. GRIMSDITCH.

THE MODERN SHORT STORY.*

That the prejudice of the reading public against the short story is rapidly passing is sufficiently evidenced in the recent experiments of two well-known English publishing houses. (I am not concerned here, of course, with the standardised magazine type of short story, whose only interest, apart from the speeding of an idle hour, would lie in the indication it offered of the psychology of the mass of modern readers.) The first of these experiments comes, with commendable audacity, from the house of Jonathan Cape, who has embarked upon a "Story Series," each volume of which is to consist of a bunch of short stories by a single author; and eight books of the series have already appeared. The second experiment comes from the house of Heinemann, in the shape of a beautifully produced volume of over a thousand pages, consisting of nearly two hundred of the "great" short stories of the world; and at the extraordinarily low price of eight and sixpence.

The prejudice against the modern short story is a little difficult to understand. So far as I grasp it, it seems to be based upon two grounds: (1) that the modern short story is gloomy, and (2) that it ends, so far as it can be said to end at all, unsatisfactorily.

I have seen dozens of letters to the editor of an enlightened weekly review (where one good story is printed in each number) bitterly protesting against the sombre nature of the fiction he publishes. "Give us," they say in effect, "as much of the gloomy state of affairs to-day as you like in your pages upon current events; but for mercy's sake give us lighter reading in your literary pages." The implication is that a man turns to art for an escape from the tragic nature of the life he is compelled to lead. Which is a fallacy. No man yet truly escaped from the tragedy of his life by rushing into a glittering orgy of "lighter reading." If modern life hurts you, you cannot really be rid of that hurt by running away from modern life; your only hope of release is by coming to some understanding of it. And who can help you to a better understanding than the artist? Would you place his position so low, once more, as the jester of olden times, and give him cap and bells and a painted bladder?

If the modern short story, then, has tended to be gloomy that is no reason for desecrating it, unless of course that

gloom is nothing finer than a morbid self-indulgence of the writer himself, intent only on working off his own black bile. If on the other hand the tragedy presented provides also an *interpretation*, we have every reason to be grateful; since through the seeing eye of the artist we have envisioned a harmony where before we saw only a chaos, and found a true escape at last in understanding.

So much for the first ground for prejudice. The second, though this may seem strange at first, is allied to it. To complain that the modern short story ends unsatisfactorily implies, I take it, that the reader likes a good honest plot. I sympathise with him, whilst at the same time reminding him that the short story is not necessarily the place for a plot at all, at least in the old sense of the word. For the modern short story is more akin to poetry than to the novel. Where ninety-nine writers can spread themselves attractively over three hundred pages of a novel, only one can discipline himself into the three thousand words of a short story; the short-story writer must be more strict in his selection, more sensitive, more loaded with vital images and, like the poet, more able to flash his interpretation in a single line. Also (and here lies the reason why he abandons the plot as such) he must realise that, since interpretation is his aim, and since no living interpretation is possible where the reader does not do half the work with the writer, he has to evoke the imagination rather than supply it. What he excludes therefore is as important a concern of his craft as what he includes. You have only to study the work of such recognised masters of the modern short story as A. E. Coppard, T. F. Powys, D. H. Lawrence, Martin Armstrong, Liam O'Flaherty and John Metcalf to see how carefully they study this art of selection.

The result upon the reader of such methods as I have outlined is that, whereas the story with the slick plot may just as well be thrown away once you have robbed it of its only surprise, the modern selective story, wherein method and poetry have taken the place of plot, can be read over and over again and with a new enrichment every time.

The one writer of to-day who is exploiting to the full the best possibilities of the short story is Mr. Coppard. The title-story in his new book is a little masterpiece, his best yet, and as fine as anything Maupassant ever put his name to. The conversation of those three country women out gathering "kindling," revealing as it does not only their own pathetic histories but the way in which they echo the plight of all their multitudinous sisters, shows the fine insight into the peasant mind that is one of Mr. Coppard's greatest assets. His power of setting down peasant conversation, in all its raciness and native wit and rather inconsequent senselessness, is another; and such a piece of conversational writing as that in "The Old Venerable," in which he reports the talk of an old man of the woods with an unsympathetic gamekeeper, makes one almost regret that Mr. Coppard should sometimes give his tales a more sophisticated setting in which he is not so clearly at home. It is significant that Mr. Coppard insists on calling his short stories "tales." In them is no intruding moral; their plot (if such it may be called) is quite as natural as the plots of everyday life itself; they mingle the rough and the smooth, the crude and the poetic, as life will capriciously do; they are told with all the sensitiveness of a poet's power over word and image and they evoke one's imagination to a larger scope than their immediate theme, by unobtrusively widening out from the particular to the universal. The best of the world's tale tellers have done more. "The Field of Mustard" is (I use the word carefully) a beautiful book.

Perhaps the three examples of Mr. Jonathan Cape's "Short Series" that lie before me do not comprise the best selection. I hope not, for they hardly represent the modern short story at its best. Though many readers will revel in the stories of Mr. Edmund Candler, for the amazingly clear glimpses they give of remote lands and remoter people, this does not make them good stories. Indeed they are more than half travel sketches, as one might perhaps expect from the pen of one of the most gifted travellers of our time. The long title story—in

* "The Field of Mustard." By A. E. Coppard. 7s. 6d. (Jonathan Cape).—"The Emergency Man." By Edmund Candler. 7s. 6d. (Jonathan Cape).—"The Grace of Lambs." By Manuel Komroff. 7s. 6d. (Jonathan Cape).—"Doorways in Drumorty." By Lorna Moon. 6s. (Jonathan Cape).—"Georgian Stories, 1926." 7s. 6d. (Chapman & Hall).—"Evenings on a Farm near Dikanka." By Nikolay Golgol. 7s. 6d. (Chatto & Windus).—"Great Short Stories of the World." 8s. 6d. (Heinemann).

which, rather to the detriment of our own generation, two heroes, one of the Great War and another of an earlier day, are contrasted—is easily the best; but even there the combination of travel and pure tale spoils our enjoyment. Mr. Komroff's stories, I can well imagine, might even meet with the approval of the reader spoon-fed on the American standardised magazine story. Their only difference is that they are well written and often built round an "idea." But to be able to write well is only half the battle of the short-story writer; and Mr. Komroff's "ideas" are of a deceitfully portentous nature that half a minute's real thinking would puff away into thin air. Miss Moon's tales are but another version, of course, of "A Window in Thrums," but she has not always the magic of Barrie to keep her homely sentiment from slipping into sentimentality.

A book better designed to illustrate what I have written is the "Georgian Stories, 1926," and the most apt of the whole bunch for the purpose is William Gerhardi's perfect short story, "The Big Drum." Here is no plot and only the briefest of incidents; the casual eye would have passed it by; but the artist takes it, by his craft moulds it afresh, by his art blows new life into it, and behold! our sleeping imagination is suddenly awakened, and we know we are in the presence of a drama touching the very core of life. Such a story—and Mr. Coppard's "The Higgler" and Mr. O'Flaherty's "The Tent," both included in this collection—can be read a dozen times and each time with that fine renewal that comes of the reading of a pregnant poem.

Some of the best of modern short stories come from Russia, whose writers seem specially endowed with the power of revealing, under the flash of their words, the permanence that lurks beneath the most trivial incident. If Nikolay Golgol's "Evenings on a Farm near Dikanka" do not always maintain the level I suggest, that is perhaps because they are extremely early work. Nevertheless they give vivid glimpses into Ukrainian peasant life, with all its queer lore and Slavonic fatalism; and such a tale as "St. John's Eve" is amongst the best even of Golgol himself.

To write adequately of Messrs. Heinemann's wonderful book would be to embark on a history of the short story. I can do no more than congratulate the publisher and recommend the book to the attention of every reader. The selection is good; here are stories from ancient Egypt, from Greece, from Rome, from Persia and China, from the Bible, and from the whole literature of the modern world. The translations have on the whole been wisely chosen. The book should surely be one of the successes of the season; and what is more important to most of us, it should do much finally to reinstate the short story as one of the most adequate and beautiful art-forms that literature has yet evolved.

C. HENRY WARREN.

FRANCISCAN STUDIES.*

Here is yet another book on St. Francis. It differs, however, from most of the volumes produced for the recent seventh centenary celebrations in that it is not a "popular" account of the Saint's life or teaching for the general reader, but a work of investigation and learned criticism for the serious scholar who is concerned with the "problem" of Assisi. Here, in this handsomely produced and illustrated book, to which Professor Paul Sabatier contributes a brief preface, are eleven chapters on different aspects of St. Francis and his influence upon the world by eleven writers who have made a special study of their respective subjects and approach, in a spirit analogous to that of the "higher criticism" of the Bible, the task of disentangling the Francis of reality from the Francis of legend. The task is, the eleven writers agree in admitting, a difficult one. It is not merely, as Professor Burkitt's intricate chapter shows, that the original sources from which our

knowledge of St. Francis is drawn are themselves contradictory on many points, but that St. Francis, like the Christ Whom he served, is apt to be interpreted by His followers or admirers to suit their own inclinations and ends—certain aspects of his character and message being emphasised to the exclusion of others.

The problems of Franciscan criticism are many. But one of the central controversies is between those who regard the Saint as a contemplative and those who insist that he was an apostle. In "The Dilemma of St. Francis and the Two Traditions," Mr. Harold Goad suggests that the rival claims of prayer and preaching, of contemplation and action, caused at first much perplexity in the mind of Francis, but that the apostle in him won the conflict:

"A careful examination of the sequence of his life reveals a certain inner rhythm, wherein periods of solitary prayer lead up to vivid flashes of illumination, followed by periods of intense apostolic activity, thus proving that the first of the series are preparatory and subsidiary to the last. At times the flash is so vivid as to dazzle us even to-day and to be in itself a supreme apostolic act. For symbols and parables embody for all mankind doctrines or spiritual lessons in strangely dramatic or imaginative form. What could be more apostolic than the scene of the Renunciation of the World, the parable of the Marriage with Lady Poverty, the preaching to the birds, the Christmas crib at Greccio, the miracle of the Stigmatisation, and indeed all the chief actions of the last years of the marvellous life? The appeal of these symbolic *gestes* is to all the world and to all times; they are not the deeds of a contemplative, but of an apostle."

Mr. Goad goes on to claim that St. Francis never wished his example to be literally followed by his adherents. He was essentially the apostle, whose inspiration could most fruitfully live by absorption and adaptation:

"Most men regard the gifts of God as living principles, capable of development and self-adjustment to life around. Others, however, seem to consider inspiration as a single transcendent creative word, immutable for all eternity. They distrust and betray the law of life through a mistaken loyalty to origins. Not so St. Francis, who, as we have seen, constantly read in the response of circumstance to his efforts at right service, the indications of God's Will as to what he should do next. Following his principle, we prefer to see in the immense success of the Franciscan ministry, in its missions, its great friaries and its theological schools, proof that this was its true line of development—rather than cavil, as many critics seem to do, at modifications of the Rule that this development implied."

Mr. A. G. Little, almost alone among our eleven contributors, combats this view. The main weight of these various studies falls in favour of the organised developments that have embodied, if they have also somewhat obscured, the simplicity and inspiration of St. Francis; and if I have concentrated on Mr. Goad's chapter, it is not because the other writers are less worthy, but because Mr. Goad has perhaps most concisely summarised the central tendency of the team. For myself I confess that the volume runs counter to my own prejudices. I own to a "loyalty to origins," and, just as it seems to me that St. Paul too often hides rather than extends the teaching of his Master, so the essential St. Francis appears to be lost in the organisations that have sprung up in his name. Yet I admit that this very able and interesting book has at least converted me to the view that, the world being what it was and is, the actual developments of the Franciscan ministry were all but inevitable. What we seem to need is a constant renewal of inspiration—a fresh St. Francis every century!

GILBERT THOMAS.

LAMPMAN.*

I had not thought to be called upon for a review of Archibald Lampman's poems, so secure is his place in the national Pantheon: it is with calm satisfaction that I have watched both his fame and his popularity grow side by side and steadily, decade by decade. No Canadian writer who ever lived holds at the moment a more stable

* "St. Francis of Assisi—1226-1926: Essays in Commemoration." Edited by Walter Seton, M.A., D.Lit. 16s. (University of London Press.)

* "Lyrics of Earth." By Archibald Lampman. Edited by and with Introduction by Duncan Campbell Scott. \$2.50. (Toronto: Musson.)

position in the public regard, though many are more widely read and some have experienced temporary bursts of acclaim that Lampman has never known.

Were it only to say this, there would be no need of a review to greet one more edition of his work; but there is another factor: the present "Lyrics of Earth," inheriting its title from the little volume of 1893, has by skilful editing become a new book. On Lampman's death in 1899, his close friend and literary executor, Duncan Campbell Scott, put altogether the complete works, wrote the historic "Memoir" as preface, and in 1900 published the whole as the "Poems" that we all know—the only Lampman work on the market in this country.

Now Dr. Scott is not only himself one of Canada's most distinguished poets, but he is also a man of exceptional general culture and a critic of rare discrimination. During the almost thirty years since death separated the young men, he has become increasingly conscious of Lampman's greatness and defects; he has digested his brother poet's work, reached slowly his mature conclusions about it; and now, at the height of his own poetic and critical powers, has presented Canada with a new Lampman, greater and finer and more lovable than I, who have loved his work long, supposed existed potentially, waiting to be called into concrete manifestation by the interpretative genius of his chum.

This miracle has been wrought by three processes: (1) The less artistic and less significant poems have been discarded, reducing the bulk from 473 pages to 271 pages, with a relative gain in average quality of content. (2) The remaining poems have been arranged with the most subtle logic: not only have like poems been associated, but the new grouping tends to make self-evident the utmost beauty of the poet's work, and illustrates to their best advantage his mind and heart and powers: this is the least obvious but most important of Dr. Scott's services, and more than either of the other operations secures instantaneous assent to the conception of the new Lampman Dr. Scott has created out of the material, which we now see was formerly presented in a very raw state. (3) The old "Memoir" is left to lie in libraries in the complete "Poems," and a totally new "Introduction" has been furnished, which tells in simple prose of the new Lampman found in the newly-arranged poems. It is much shorter than the "Memoir," but contains both valuable biographical data and a critical analysis that in the grace of its style and quality of its acumen has only been equalled a few times in Canada.

Canadians who are not familiar with Lampman's poems are of course to be pitied, but they have the advantage of coming to the new "Lyrics of Earth" without any misconceptions to be undone. Those who admire him already, which is to say all his readers, should really put the "Poems" away, and through "Lyrics of Earth" indulge in the joy of discovery of the new Lampman, who is in every way finer and more satisfying than the man we formerly knew.

W. A. DEACON.

POST-WAR PEOPLE.*

It has become something of a commonplace that the war period effected psychological as well as material and political changes; that the easy talk in which many of us indulged as to a "return to pre-war conditions" was idle talk, for there can be no such thing as a "return"—history does not so repeat itself. There are indeed probably but few people who would welcome such a return, even though the war failed to do many of the things which we hypnotised ourselves into believing it would effect; it did not lead us to a new heaven and a new earth; it does not appear to have made the world any safer for democracy, and few, whatever their hopes, have the credulity to believe that it "ended war."

* "Young Anarchy: a Novel." By Philip Gibbs. 7s. 6d. (Hutchinson).—"Sack and Sugar." By Mrs. Alfred Sidgwick. 7s. 6d. (Collins.)

How far it is to be held responsible for that independent and defiant attitude of youth which Sir Philip Gibbs sums up as "Young Anarchy" may even be questioned; for it seems as though each "rising generation" flouts the conventions of the generation to which it is to succeed. There were oldsters forty to fifty years ago who thought the world was coming to an end when anarchical young women took to living alone in London "diggings," took to riding in hansom cabs, to climbing to the outside seats of omnibuses, and had to be peremptorily forbidden (by the management) when they attempted to smoke cigarettes in Soho restaurants!

In following the ingeniously interwoven record of the doings of a group of the young "anarchical" people of to-day Sir Philip Gibbs presents a thoroughly interesting study of the opposing views of some of our younger and older contemporaries leading up to the "moral" that things are not quite so bad as the pessimists would have us believe. That moral is to be deduced from the behaviour of all during the General Strike, when "that youth of ours—those Mervyns and Jocelyns and Lettices of post-war England—so harshly criticised, so careless of criticism, such rebels against authority, so reckless of convention, so self-assured, played the game according to the rules, and in the spirit of the old tradition." The story which leads to that conclusion is marked by those qualities which have won a wide popularity for Sir Philip's earlier novels—healthy sentiment, keen insight and sympathetic observation; though the journalist has at times got the better of the novelist. Incidentally Sir Philip says that one of his characters earns nine shillings a day addressing envelopes at one shilling a thousand! He would need to write with an unusually rapid pen and unflagging energy to earn a third as much, if indeed even that were possible.

It is a very different group of post-war folks to whom Mrs. Sidgwick introduces us in "Sack and Sugar"; a group consisting primarily of a mother with her two sons and two daughters, all of whom were born in different countries. The mother is the narrator, and the key-note of her medley is struck in the opening words: "I am English and I have four children. My husband's name was Colmar and my father's name was Wetter, but I was born in London, and if that does not make me a citizen of the British Empire, I should like to know what would." Yet she begins with the troubles of English boarding-houses in war time as experienced by her and her international family. This cosmopolitan widow lives in Paris with her son Henri, her dachshund Ludwig and her cook Sophie; in Paris she has her married daughter Eva, in England her other son Victor, while her daughter Gerda is ever going and coming and having *affaires* that seem as though they would never end satisfactorily. The story follows the fortunes now of one member and now of another, but always in a lively and witty fashion, for Madame Colmar is one of the most truly entertaining characters that I have happened upon in recent fiction, and whether she is at home in Paris, rescuing her temporarily infatuated Gerda from Munich, visiting her sister in Cornwall, holiday-making in Italy, or making the acquaintance of "the family Watkins" into which Victor is to marry, she is always her wonderful, easygoing and thoroughly amusing self.

WALTER JERROLD.

THE REVIVAL OF CRITICISM.*

Recently I read an entertaining review of Louisa Alcott's "Little Women" by Mr. John Drinkwater, in which that sound and discriminating critic made a pointed allusion to "the present generation of literary analysts bred up on the pretentious subtleties of Bloomsbury." I have often observed with pleasure how the usually urbane Mr. Drinkwater can suddenly deal out a deadly punch in controversy, but the above allusion gave me less pleasure than it might have done if Mr. Drinkwater had indicated

* "The Revival of Aesthetics." By Hubert Waley. 3s. 6d. (Hogarth Press).—"Transition." By Edwin Muir. 7s. 6d. (Hogarth Press.)

more definitely the identity of his wraith-like enemies. They undoubtedly exist. One has only to read some of the twaddle in the little "highbrow" weeklies to realise that; but one must discriminate between pretentiousness and sincere gaucherie. Things must be often very confusing for the younger critics who have not assimilated as much as they have read. Cataclysmic events have broken up the intellectual garden of criticism since Matthew Arnold left everything lovely. The honest doubt of the Victorian epoch was a homely, simple matter in comparison with the condition of moral and intellectual indigestion which has followed a prolonged and variegated feast ranging from Baudelaire, Nietzsche, Dostoevsky, Tolstoy, Bernard Shaw to the "Great" War, Freud, Chekhov, Joyce, Proust and the publications of the Hogarth Press! Is there a Mephistophelian smile on the ascetic lips of Mr. Leonard Wolf nowadays when he peruses his autumn and spring lists?

Well, say what you will about criticism, it is very much alive; probably it has not been so full of ideas and new endeavours since Samuel Coleridge started mistranslating the newest German philosophers. No doubt critics sometimes, when they are not too sure if they stand on their head or their feet, do yield to the temptation to make at least a show of being "different." Peculiarity may sometimes be confused with the sincerity of originality, which is always careless of fashions. Mr. Muir, who is one of the best of our younger critics, ties himself into some awkward knots when he talks of what he is pleased to call "the *zeit geist*"; but so soon as he comes to an individual artist and exchanges pseudo-philosophy for the scalpel of applied criticism he is admirable and delightful.

But "the period's desires" does not exhaust his supply of irrelevance when he generalises on the *zeit geist*. For instance, what has his opinion that "nothing is more amazing than the amiability of literary men towards one another" nowadays got to do with "the *zeit geist*"? Or his further comment that "politeness cannot account for such happenings; it would be perfectly satisfied with the acknowledgment that Mr. de la Mare and Mr. Eliot are writers of indubitable and acknowledged talent"? Is there not something hopelessly incongruous in such a bracketing of such poets? And if there is one thing especially relevant to be said about them both it is that their genius is more remarkable than their talent. If Mr. Eliot had more talent he would have given us enough good poetry to make the bracketing of his name with Mr. de la Mare's understandable.

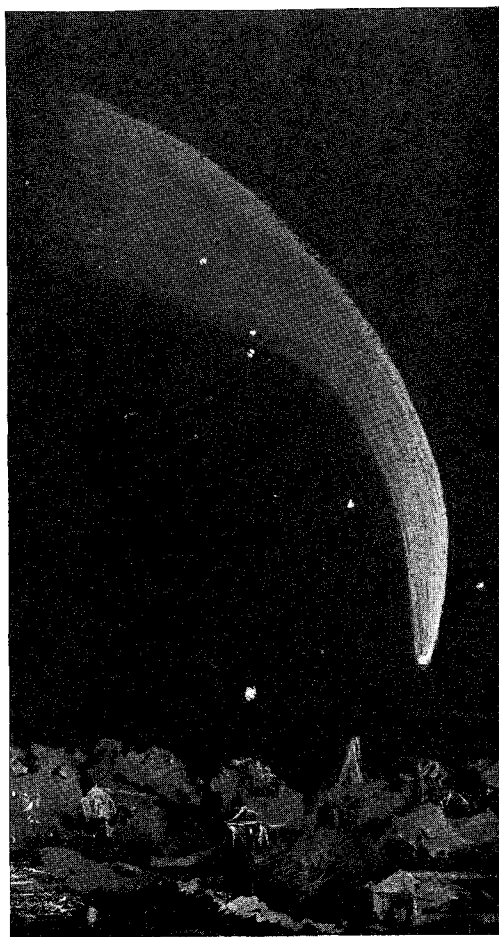
Mr. Muir is often subtle in writing about some of the most difficult problems presented by authors like Joyce, Edith Sitwell, D. H. Lawrence, Robert Graves and T. S. Eliot, but one feels that he does not allow himself enough leisure, in 218 pages, to do himself or his difficult and diverse subjects justice. He can be very severe in summing up an intellectual like Aldous Huxley, whom he does not sympathise with, and brilliantly interpretative with another like Mrs. Virginia Woolf, whom he appreciates sympathetically. He is illuminating in frequent details, in sudden flashes of perception; but one cannot help hoping that he will soon get tired of "the transition" and "the *zeit geist*," which call for a wider perspective, perhaps a deeper comprehension than in this volume he displays. He is certainly one of the glorious company of critics who are ready to lose their own soul in order to find it in interpretation, however, and his book, in spite of its unpromising title, is one of the cheering signs of renewed life in criticism."

Mr. Waley's pamphlet, in which he gives us one of the best of the Hogarth Essays, is a little masterpiece of condensed and suggestive statement about the foundations of criticism. He makes a courageous attempt to correlate, while criticising, the findings of the psychologists with the established canons of æsthetics. Towards the end of his essay he says:

"Unless we are utterly to revise our psychological axioms we must assume that the senses merely mediate an impression, of which some larger totality behind them feels either approval or

disapproval. It has been with the workings of this larger totality that I have tried to concern myself in this essay."

In the light of this confession one rereads certain provoking assertions (Mr. Waley has not enough space to argue properly) with admiration, for the author has endeavoured to sweep right across the psychophysical field of reality, from the physical reactions of the



Daylight Comet.

From "The Romance of Comets," by Mary Proctor, F.R.A.S. (Harper Bros.).

organism to the most recondite mystical states, in order to present in a clearer light the nature of æsthetic consciousness. It is impossible in a brief review to do justice to his ingenious philosophising and one can only commend his essay to serious students of æsthetics.

R. L. MÉGROZ,

AMERICAN SOUNDINGS.*

There are plenty of Americas still to be discovered, and Mr. Strachey, with his well-known bent for cultured leisure and amenity, may be congratulated on having found a "belt" of American society so extremely to his liking. Nobody else has been so favourably impressed of recent years, for the impressions left on other British tourists and lecturers have revealed an element of criticism which is absent from Mr. Strachey's pages. All this shows that there is as much miscellaneity as ever among the ingredients that go to make up "God's own country," but also that the miscellaneity is not a Western monopoly by any means. For a book of extreme interest and variety might easily be made up of the reports that English visitors have brought back from the United States, from Dickens downwards, concerning the American race.

The indulgent view our author takes of everything and everybody in the West comes as a pleasant change after all the snagging that has raged across the Atlantic since Mr. Baldwin returned. Mr. Strachey wisely leaves finance alone, as being something inapposite perhaps for the country clubs and academic haunts that he preferred. There is everything to be said for this eclectic attitude on the part of a chronicler determined not to be depressed on any account, not even on account of so many millions a year. This resoluteness to be cheerful at any cost reminds one of the Irish wayfarer of whom we read in one

* "American Soundings." By J. St. Loe Strachey. 12s. 6d. (Hodder & Stoughton.)

of the Martin-Somerville books. Having made his advances and found that nothing resulted, he waved his hat with a wild, indignant flourish and exclaimed: "Arrah, ye wouldn't let the matther of a pinny make throuble between frinds?" We are far from suggesting that Mr. Strachey's affability is anything but disinterested. Yet there is certainly a parallel here with the way in which he covers America from point to point, and culls from every passing flower the ingredients for an unruffled serenity. He admits as much. He disarms those friends of his who murmur that everything may not be quite so rosy as he has painted it. He says he has a "soul that is American by nature." As an American by adoption, he is a whole-hogger, as they say so gracefully at Chicago. He loves America "as an entity," and swallows the lot. It sounds a desperate experiment, but it must be true. Otherwise how are we to account for this brilliant piece of improvisation?

Fortunately Mr. Strachey rarely goes wrong in search of a theme, and America, like Hamlet and Dr. Johnson, never slackens in topical interest. Whether we pace with Dr. Murray Butler on the Columbian heights overlooking Harlem, or look down from the Blue Ridge upon the vale of the Shenandoah, whether we banter or compliment the American woman or stick the pin of question into the periwinkle of American slang, there is a feast of entertainment all the way. The excerpts alone in this pleasant wander-book would make a decent anthology, especially the chapters on Emerson and Walt Whitman. As for the passages on liquor, they include one which develops in a highly original way the author's contention that prohibition is the greatest power for advertisement that drink has ever known. This, like the chapter on party politics, gives the reader an effect of the best current conversation, and it is for its gossiping character that the book will be valued wherever it goes.

J. P. COLLINS.

HAMPSHIRE.*

Such books as this do much to increase an Englishman's pride in his country; a pride which is the more justifiable when one takes the trouble to seek out the beauty spots, tucked away even in secluded corners. In this attractive series the trouble of getting to know such places is reduced almost to a minimum, leaving but the undiluted enjoyment so dear to the heart of the real country lover. Mr. Clive Holland, as a Hampshire man, speaks from a long and intimate knowledge, in the gaining of which he has caravanned, cycled, motored and walked pretty well all over the county. The result is a feast for all who delight to delve into the literary, historical and legendary associations which most of our country-sides are prepared to yield to those who know how to approach them. It is amazing that, in these days of speedy and luxurious travel, when the miles melt as if by magic, there should still be any unknown, or rather little known, spots on this small island, but Mr. Holland has drawn for us delightful pen pictures of many charming villages nestling peacefully out of reach of the din and clamour which represent the daily life of so many.

In Hampshire, as in the other counties similarly treated, there is abundance of material, and the author has paid equal attention to his theme from many points of view. We congratulate him on the way he has deftly woven the varying interests and made of them such an attractive picture. Besides the county's associations with the familiar names of R. L. S., Charles Kingsley, Dickens, White of Selborne, Jane Austen, Mary Russell Mitford, etc., many other famous connections crowd in upon us, chiefly surrounding Bournemouth. As the home of cricket, too, Hampshire has reason to be proud. Mr. Holland has gone back many years and enlivened his pages with numerous anecdotes and incidents of those far off days, conjured up visions of old time sports and customs,

* "Unknown Hampshire." By Clive Holland. 15s. (Bodley Head.)

and proved up to the hilt the justification of all he claims for his native county. The illustrations by Douglas Snowdon are a sheer delight; twelve are reproduced in delicate colourings, while the black-and-white, numbering over forty are equally charming.

L. O.

THE ANATOMY OF TOBACCO.*

This book was published in 1884 when the author was in his twentieth year, and copies of the original edition command high prices to-day. There is little of exceptional genius in the work, and Mr. Machen at the age of sixty speaks without compassion of his first effort. "I have before me," he says, "a queer little book . . . as bad a little book as well can be. It is a hodge-podge of tobacco pipes and easy schoolboy scholarship, and Latin and Greek tags, and a great deal of Scholastic Logic, and a sort of thin skimming of philosophy obtained from Tennemann's 'Manual of the History of Philosophy,' and a good deal of the manner of that famous old book, Burton's 'Anatomy of Melancholy'; with all the scourings and rinsings of the poor mind that conceived it; a young mind that would have been gay, but was cast into a dismal prison." Later on he adds significantly: "But, very darkly hidden beneath all the verbiage, I think I can see a dawning glimmering of recognition of the great truth that everything is very good, that there is nothing common or unclean, not even an ounce of cheap tobacco."

The book is the sort of joke one expects from a young man, and there is an "Undergraduate humour" that reminds the reader of some of the clever nonsense of Lewis Carroll. It is probably a reaction against the stolidity of academical learning—a refusal to take solemn things (like Formal Logic) as solemnly as their exponents require. There is a poet struggling for expression within the heart of Youth, and he breaks out in the opening sentences:

"Come with me, I pray, to the wooded hills and dreamy valleys of mine own Siluria. Leave the 'chargeable noise of the great town,' and stand with me on the mountain that I love, while the wind sweeps over the heather and bracken, bringing with it the salt of the far-away sea."

There is a streak of Puckishness, too, and the pair of them (Poet and Puck) must "guy" the pomposity of Education if only to save the soul alive.

The young Arthur Machen was obviously a pipe-smoker and probably loved tobacco; but at twenty one cannot have the deep appreciation and tranquillity of emotion that comes with maturity. He had not found the divine peace which filled Sir James Barrie when he wrote "My Lady Nicotine." The explanation may be of course that he had not yet discovered his "Arcadian Mixture"; and although there may be brilliance and erudition in a youthful smoker, there can be no profound wisdom until he has found his ideal tobacco.

The most interesting thing about the book, however, is the insight one gets into the two men—at twenty and sixty. It almost reconciles one to the idea of growing older. When a man approaches the forties he is more or less appalled at the swift passage of the years. He is saddened with the coming of his birthdays, and he longs to "slow down" if not to mark time for a space. At twenty, no one ever thinks of life's slipping by, and there is an impatience for the years to pass; but at middle age the flight of time brings dismay.

There is great consolation to be found in reading the Introduction. It is a fine piece of writing and has the flavour of old wine or (which may be more appropriate in this case) of an old brier pipe. The philosophy is so ripe, so mellow, and the style of writing has that blend of facility and felicity that only comes from experience and quiet meditation. The Arthur Machen of 1926 can afford to smile at his prototype of 1884; he can afford to be severe with him; and in spite of all the "Vice-Versas" and "Dorian Grays" he would not for a moment wish to change

* "The Anatomy of Tobacco." By Arthur Machen. 7s. 6d. (Knopf.)

places with him. One is tempted to exclaim that there is too much worship of youth nowadays by the middle-aged. Browning, at any rate, knew better.

The book is beautifully produced, and all lovers of Arthur Machen's work will like to read it once. But the Introduction, specially written for this edition, they will read again and again.

ROGER WRAY.

CARICATURES.

What is a caricature?

Mr. Bohun Lynch, in his entertaining and informative volume* on the history of the art, tells us that the word "caricature" is derived from the Italian *caricare*, "to load," and he therefore suggests "overloaded representation" as a brief and convenient definition. Dr. Johnson called it "an exaggerated resemblance in drawings," while Murray defines it as:

"Grotesque and ludicrous representation of persons or things by exaggeration of their most characteristic or striking features."

There seems to be a common agreement, then, that exaggeration is at the root of caricature, and that it is this exaggeration of characteristic features which provides the fun of the fair. But one might push this definition a little farther and say that the exaggeration must be deliberate and conscious on the part of the artist for the result to be true caricature. Where the intention is less certain, the art is apt to be labelled "grotesque," and it is often exceedingly difficult to draw the line between the caricature proper (or improper!) and grotesque art. Mediæval gargoyles, for example, present this problem, and in the primitive art of races in an early stage of civilisation, it is hazardous to assert that exaggerations are always deliberate and conscious.

But from the earliest times caricature, as Mr. Lynch points out, has been "used as a weapon by subjection against authority." He finds traces of it in Egyptian, Indian, early Chinese and Greek art, while in Rome comic art was profuse. It may be argued however that a nation has to reach a fairly advanced stage of civilisation before a satiric art is evolved, and since civilisation is invariably accompanied by the practice of some form of usury, it is not altogether surprising to learn that from the earliest times to the present day the Jews have been a source of inspiration to caricaturists. Mr. Lynch cites a thirteenth century illuminated roll at the Record Office in which the drawing of Jewish noses is deliberately exaggerated.

Even French critics, who are apt to be scornful about the achievements of artists on this side of the Channel, have admitted that the English have a genius for caricature, and in the eighteenth century, with Hogarth, Rowlandson, Gillray and others, satiric art reached a height in England that was certainly not surpassed on the Continent. Since then England has never had any lack of gifted and amusing caricaturists, and it probably possesses to-day the most original and witty of living caricaturists in the person of Mr. Max Beerbohm, to whom Mr. Lynch quite justifiably devotes a whole chapter. Commenting on the fact that most of Mr. Beerbohm's drawings are made from memory, Mr. Lynch further insists that, with notable exceptions, his best drawings are of people with whose faces he is not intimately familiar:

"The reason for this is simple. What remains in his memory, which is a good one, is the salient residuum of a face and figure; salient for him, that is. A big nose, instantly to be seized on and grossly to be exaggerated by the commonplace artist, may leave Max Beerbohm quite uninterested and forgetful. He may perceive that the nose, though big, has no significance in regard to the individual's character. Some other feature, not immediately remarkable, may have it. He remembers, then, that feature which does seem to him important and draws attention to it, and leaves the nose severely alone. That is he treats it with the contempt of plain reality or understatement."

* "A History of Caricature." By Bohun Lynch. 25s. (Faber & Gwyer.)—"P.T.O." A Volume of Drawings. By Fougasse. 10s. 6d. (Methuen.)

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Trinity Hall (front).

With pinnacles of King's in background.
From "Cambridge University," by A. Gray (Heffer).

While thus doing full justice to the psychological penetration of Mr. Beerbohm's cartoons, Mr. Lynch also recognises the remarkable pictorial qualities in his work which have won for "Max" the deep admiration and respect of his brother artists:

"Max's use of water-colour upon paper which is not quite white, paper to which he has been faithful for many years, is deft and individual: and in his choice of tints and shades his fastidiousness, his enjoyment of the work, and his understanding of each individual subject is explicit. . . . There is also that beauty of line, true, clean, and unfaltering, which is to be seen in nearly all his work."

The distinction between the caricature and the "funny drawing" becomes clear if, after looking through the numerous illustrations which embellish Mr. Lynch's history, we turn over the pages of the latest volume by that popular *Punch* artist, Fougasse. To say that Fougasse *never* exaggerates would be untrue, no doubt; but exaggeration is not the basis of his art, and he is more properly to be described as a humorous draughtsman than as caricaturist. Fougasse is essentially an artist with ideas, comic ideas, and these ideas he develops usually in a series of drawings leading to a climax. Fougasse is an able exponent of graphic narrative art: each of his drawings, or more frequently, each group of his connected drawings, tells a story, and that story is told with that point of a pen or pencil, sometimes heightened with a colour brush, but always directed by an acute eye, performed by a skilful hand, and inspired by a joyous recognition of the comic elements in life.

FRANK RUTTER.

A STATESMAN'S LOVE LETTERS.*

How the world loves a lover! How it cherishes and

* "The Love Letters of William Pitt, First Lord Chatham." By Ethel A. Edwards. 13s. (Chapman & Hall.)

warms its elderly heart with the great love stories of the past! It is true that the letters of Pitt and Hester Grenville were the letters of middle-aged lovers, at whom the world is a little ready to jeer; but the most youthful of lovers could not have excelled Pitt in the ardour and passionate abandonment with which he expressed his love, even in those conventional days.

For over one hundred and fifty years these letters have lain disregarded among the Chatham MSS. in the Record Offices, London, and Mrs. Edwards is to be congratulated on the way in which she has performed what was obviously a labour of love on her part, for her running comment and sympathetic, womanly notes following each letter, place the correspondence in a setting that adds to its glowing beauty.

The introduction to the letters is a short and illuminating sketch of the life of Pitt up to the time of his marriage. We get a glimpse of a man with a tremendous personality, a fascinating presence, triumphing over the most adverse circumstances of bad health and poor fortune, and what was probably more to Lady Hester's mind, a man with wonderful, arresting grey eyes, tall, self-assured, beautifully dressed — a glimpse that makes us appreciate more the following letters. Until he was forty-six, though he had many friends who almost worshipped him, many among them being women, Pitt had found no one upon whom to expend the deep and passionate love of which he was capable. He had only been in love once, a passing infatuation for a charming Frenchwoman, but it seems probable that Lady Hester had long loved the great statesman who had been the friend of her brothers for over twenty years.

For was she not still unmarried at thirty-three, though sought by many as a wealthy and charming woman? When Pitt first met Lady Hester she was fourteen to his twenty-seven years. They were on different planes, but it seemed little short of tragic blindness on Pitt's part that caused him to waste so many years in loneliness before discovering a love that lay at his feet.

Then we come to the letters. Pitt's to Lady Hester have that strange, undefinable charm that everywhere distinguishes the man. His letters, too, had more of passion, of utter abandonment than did hers. His love had wakened late, but it was suddenly awake, and it never slept till death touched him. In her letters, mingled with her adoration of him, there is an almost maternal solicitude for his health. Sometimes a note of anxiety and doubt as to his love creeps into her letters. "It is so difficult," comments Mrs. Edwards, "for a woman to believe that a man loves her as much as he says he does. This is not so generally understood as it should be." Again and again Pitt expresses his fear of his unworthiness of such an ideal love as hers. But he need not have feared, for the love consummated by marriage lasted their whole life, through dark and terrible days of illness and trouble, through days of fame and honour. Always they were of one mind and one heart. Their last letters are as loving as their first.

V. E. W.

IRONY.*

Professor Thomson takes a word whose edge has been blunted by centuries of careless usage, and sharpens its meaning again. "But what is Irony? It is not, of course,

* "Irony: An Historical Introduction." By J. A. K. Thomson. 8s. 6d. (Allen & Unwin.)

pessimism; it is not satire; it is not innuendo. These three you will find in Tacitus, and find on almost every page. . . . The economy of language for which Tacitus is famous is not in his hands a method of Irony. It is a high explosive." Irony is not the weapon of those who seek to heighten facts, but of those who prefer to let facts do their own work. Thus, Professor Thomson says of Erasmus, "plainly the master spirit in restoring to Europe the Greek thing, Irony,"

"He had to pay for this. His contemporaries, with the almost solitary exception of his dear friend, Sir Thomas More, did not understand him; when More died, no one at all. They admired his scholarship; they applauded his wit; but they really understood neither his scholarship nor his Irony. When the Lutheran Quarrel broke out, they wanted him to take sides—as if the scholar can take sides. They thought his Irony was merely a form of ridicule. They could not see that his whole value and meaning lay in a passion for moderation. It did not seem to them—it still does not seem to most people—a possible kind of passion. But it is the essence of Hellenism. In times of violent controversy anyone who tries to get the facts quite clear is always made to suffer; and if he is gently ironical at the expense of the opposing partisans, they become dancing mad."

Now to us there is a personal interest in the spirit which underlay the Irony of the Greeks. For we live in an age that is full of propaganda, and of clever men and women; but there are an increasing number of us who feel that truth is better than eloquence or even the desire to do good to others, and that we can do no better service to our generation than to set out facts as we see them, without stressing facts that without our emphasis would draw no notice of themselves, and without suppressing facts awkward to the position that we hold. If I may digress—remaining the while, as I am persuaded, entirely relevant—it was by such a method that Dr. Norman Leys in his book "Kenya" hit so hard, rousing such undying resentment; and we have heard unceasingly of Kenya ever since, from people who would wipe out the cumulative effect of a book so damaging in its quietness.

But in cleansing the rust from a splendid word Professor Thomson does other service by the way. He sketches the word's history, from its early roots in the conventional battle of the Attic Comedy, where the *Alazon* or Humbug is exposed, after his strut of triumph—springs farther back still, and shows us Homer standing apart from the story that he unfolds, a story which critics have generally considered "second-rate" but which Professor Thomson vindicates as first-rate for a great poet's purposes—traces Irony through the Attic dramatists and historians, to the few Romans who inherited this portion of their spirit—and glances at some moderns who have possessed it. He brings out afresh the imperishable glory and beauty of that Greek world of thought, which feeds each generation afresh; and, incidentally, he gives us many passages of insight and illumination, often so significant in brief space that no wise man would do more than call attention to them, merely asking the reader to look at them twice. Such are the passage which wonders how far the peculiar Irony of Euripides "was bred of" his "sadness, and the sadness from some defeat of high illusions"—that which points out, of two famous lines in Homer, that their heart-touching quality is not merely "simple pathos," for it is only the unthinking who accept the absurd thesis that the art of Greece was nothing but a child's simplicity—the whole of the examination of the *Iliad* and the character of Achilles—the exposition of the mind of Thucydides—the half-page which compares Ovid and Virgil, bringing into relief in the same packed sentences the relationship of Milton and Dryden. The book is the work of a scholar who takes nothing without testing it for himself, and its style is knit and competent, like its thinking. The writer prefers efficiency to being gaudy, and never uses an adverb unless it is necessary.

EDWARD THOMPSON.

For particulars of special Short Story Competition see page 226.

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IN these days it does not seem possible that there is easy and highly remunerative work to be had for the asking. Yet in all seriousness I say it is so. There are editors in London who, towards press-day, are almost frantic because they can't get the right stuff to print.

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Novel Notes.

HARVEST. By Peter Deane. 7s. 6d. (Hodder & Stoughton.)

"The harvest that is gathered in this book is one of tragedy," says Sir Philip Gibbs in his Foreword to Mr. Peter Deane's collection of stories. "It is the harvest of despair that was reaped by men and women—so often by women—when peace came after war. . . ." Peter Deane, who was with the Armies of Occupation, has viewed with pity and understanding the sufferings of the different nationalities, realising the helplessness of those human creatures—English, French or German—who were called upon to make heavy payment after the actual fighting was over. The scenes he describes in the occupied territory are vivid and so real that only an eyewitness could have presented them in such detail and with those little intimate touches which bring us into sympathy with the men and women whose various tragedies make poignant reading. All the stories have the strength of true incident and reveal the writer as a close observer of human nature, keenly sensible to the waste and injustice of war. We may every one of us be sensible to the waste and injustice of war nowadays, but not to every one of us have they been so harrowingly brought home as to Peter Deane. The book touches, consciously or unconsciously, upon many problems that give rise to serious thought, and should make us more than ever determined that future generations shall be saved from the carnage we have known in our time.

THE HONEST LOVERS. By F. T. Wawn. 7s. 6d. (Melrose.)

Jean Maxwell is a most surprising young person to come across in a modern novel, and it is a modern novel, though sometimes one has to search for evidence thereof. Jean is eighteen and daughter of a very clever doctor, who adores her, and of an equally clever and loving mother. Jean has a body that is quick in every sense of the word; dancing, gymnastics and swimming and a love for her parents are all her life at present, but her mind and wits are slow. She is docile and obedient to a degree that begins to fill her father with anxiety, so he agrees to and even rejoices in Jean's proposal that she shall go for a fortnight's walking tour in Cornwall unaccompanied. For Jean has begun to think that with her parents always beside her to advise she will never grow up. With her father's injunction to remember she is "a girl, a Maxwell and a Christian," and with £5 and a knapsack she sets forth to buy experience. Of course she pays dearly for it. The man she gives her whole heart to has not yet had his divorce made absolute, and though the judge has decided in his favour, Hugh is not quite certain of Leila's guilt, and would quixotically sacrifice Jean and go back to a woman he hates if he thought it right. Honest Jean of course agrees with him. Not so the parents, but they behave splendidly in the circumstances. In the months that follow Jean grows up but the growing pains are bad. The author writes in a rather unusual style, but interests us in his characters even when we are annoyed at them for denseness. There is a worship of bodily fitness and perfection that is almost pagan, and early Victorian Jean is sometimes startlingly modern in her outspokenness. Altogether a most attractive book.

THE ADMIRAL AND OTHERS. By Peggy Temple. With Introduction by St. John Adcock. 2s. 6d. (Selwyn & Blount.)

A delightful story written by a girl of twelve years of age. Told in a casual, irresponsible manner it is full of humour, brisk in action, and contains a gallery of vividly sketched characters. It is this last fact particularly that makes one visualise a very promising future for Miss Peggy Temple. Mr. St. John Adcock in his foreword to the book says: "No person of mature years, with the fear of critics before him, would have dared to create such a



Peggy Temple.

wish it every success. It is quaintly and fittingly illustrated by Eliza Pyke.

THE FOREST LURE. By G. B. Burgin. 7s. 6d. (Hutchinson.)

The fact that Prothero Graeme was undeveloped mentally was a trouble from which his parents never really recovered. Their grief that their only child should continually dwell in the Land of Shadows, was the cause of their early death. Left alone, Prothero wanders into the forest and is there found asleep by a beautiful gipsy girl. It is this girl, Simantha, Princess of the Poor People, last descendant of the Pharaohs, with all her radiance, beauty and charm, who is the outstanding figure of the story. A sincere attempt is made to re-establish Prothero in his rightful place and train Simantha to share it with him, but though it makes attractive reading and the reader eagerly watches her influence steadily helping Prothero to gain a firmer grasp of realities, the plan is not successful. One thing, however, never fails, and that is their love for each other, it is the one thing that remains with Prothero when the "wall" that separates them will persist in shutting other things out. The poignancy of the circumstances that mar their happiness is happily blended with much charm, and it is a fitting ending to see these two lovers setting out together into the unknown, following the eternal lure.

GOOD-BYE, STRANGER. By Stella Benson. 7s. 6d. (Macmillan.)

We yield to none in our admiration of Miss Stella Benson's work, and as book after book of hers has appeared we have read and delighted in them all. Among writers of to-day there is nobody like her. Her brilliancy and sparkle, her wit, her sympathy, her vitality—place her in a class apart. There is always the "faery" touch about her work, and little pretending, secret things play an important part in the lives of most of her characters—just as they do in real life. But in her latest book, "Good-bye, Stranger," we cannot help feeling that she has let her love of fantasy take the reins and gallop away with her—to the detriment of the story. If only the characters had been a little more realistic—a little less fantastic! But Miss Benson has chosen a "changeling" for her hero, a great clumsy-footed fellow, who says: "I want an enemy to take me cruelly and shake the fairy out of me—and leave me a man—and leave me sad but wise, like a man." How the changeling causes much suffering to his wife, Daley, before

the fairy is shaken out of him is told by Miss Benson in a series of queer, fantastic, puzzling episodes, which give at times an oddly stuffy atmosphere to the book. It is a strange mixture—like some Christmas puddings; and though it is packed with plums there are lumps of doubtful suet, and bits of rough, coarse candied peel to be found.

JEAN, A HALO AND SOME CIRCLES. By John Travers. 7s. 6d. (Hodder & Stoughton.)

Mrs. G. H. Bell might well have called her story "Jean in Search of Romance" or, what is pretty much the same thing to a Scottish lassie who is at once sensible and sentimental, "a Husband." Jean, an Edinburgh school teacher, living in solitary diggings, "hated suspense, and until she knew whether fate meant her to marry or be an old maid she perforce endured suspense." She was also lonely, and perhaps these things combined to entice her to build up a fictitious "affair" with John Wallace. But Jean had her pride and nobody knew her dreams, and when John Wallace in innocence shattered them, like the practical person she was, she left the pieces behind and went to India. India, as everybody knows, is an excellent matrimonial market, and here Jean meets men, is made love to, gets engaged, breaks the engagement and does a variety of things, including the best thing of all. Into the sparkling story of her adventures, Mrs. Bell has introduced many delightfully drawn characters, a fund of humour and a quantity of witty dialogue. Mr. Judbud is a rare creation—so natural in his absurdities that most of us will have met somebody like him, just as most of us will have met somebody like Jean, though she is not absurd—merely human. A cheering, wholesome book, bringing out all the fun of life without resorting to burlesque.

SOFTFOOT OF SILVER-CREEK. By Robert Leighton. 3s. 6d. net. (Ward, Lock.)

This is a North American Indian story, packed with thrilling adventures from cover to cover. It tells of a redskin boy, Softfoot, who hates killing just for the sake of killing, and so is taunted and called "coward"; and shows how, when the need to prove his courage arises, he is amongst the bravest, and saves a friend from a stampede of buffaloes. A white man says to him: "You wanted to do the thing you were afraid of doing? . . . Why, that's just about as good a definition of courage as ever I've heard." Mr. Leighton has weaved around Softfoot a rattling good story for boys, and tells it in vigorous and picturesque style.

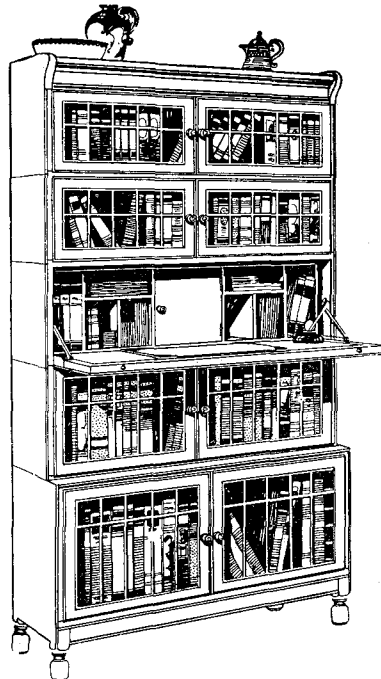
THE CAMP FIRE TORMENT. By Elsie Oxenham. 2s. 6d. (Chambers.)

This is a piece of rough and ready propaganda, readable but not stimulating. Three girls, living in a lonely part of Wales, form a society on the lines of the Camp Fire Movement, which seems to be a cross between the Kibbo Kift and the Girl Guides. They have then to decide whether to go on as they are or to open their society to new members and so become a genuine Camp. The story deals with their decision and with the difficulties they encounter in assimilating the new members and cultivating a "Camp Fire spirit." It is all very excellent. The character drawing is clear, and the dialogue is natural.

S.P.Q.R. By Peter Hastings. 7s. 6d. (Holden.)

This, the winning story in Mr. Robert Holden's First Novel Competition, is a tragi-comedy of ambition, modern in spirit but with an ancient setting. Maximus is a popular Roman gladiator, who is apparently killed one day in a fight with a Nubian. He is secretly nursed back to life, however, and the Emperor is so delighted at his unexpected reappearance in the arena some weeks later that he appoints him to the Praetorian Guard. His hours of leave are spent in "high society" in Rome and, being an opportunist and a philanderer, he becomes involved in many plots and counter-plots, but so adroit is he that he

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goes from success to success until, on the assassination of the Emperor, he is voted by popular acclamation to the throne—only to be given, in the hour of his triumph, a poisoned wine-cup by one of the women with whose affections he had lightly played. The story is delightfully written and carries the reader along at a brisk rate. It is moreover full of incidental pictures of Roman society that are not the least convincing in that they are translated, as it were, into modern terms—the author's underlying theme being that humanity is fundamentally the same in one age as in another.

THE PROPER PLACE. By O. Douglas. 7s. 6d. (Hodder & Stoughton.)

Love rather than admiration is the portion of O. Douglas; and her friends—and we are legion—can never have too many stories from her pen. Her latest story has many points in common with "Ann and her Mother," which is probably the most beautiful story she ever wrote. A sense of comfort steals over us as we read, for the book radiates a peace and a happiness that are becoming rarer among us, because they are not to be found in the pleasures that are sought after, but in the simple, common things of everyday life going on about us. There is a goodness about the characters that springs from large charity and simple naturalness. "The Proper Place" is a tonic for the lonely and dispirited, as well as being a well-written tale with excellent characterisation, which can be heartily recommended to readers. The story opens with the old and well-beloved family of Rutherford on the point of selling the beautiful home they had lived in for generations to a prosperous Glasgow merchant named Jackson. "A creature not too bright or good, for human nature's daily food" is Nicole Rutherford, the only solace left to her mother, Lady Jane, who had lost her two sons in the war and their father from grief, and now is to lose her home. The story has its setting at Kirkmeikle, a village on the Fifeshire coast, where the Rutherfurds settle at last almost happily in the quaint old Harbour House. Nicole with her sweetness, beauty and gaiety is born to make friends, and her friends are ours—the usurping but kindly Jacksons, Simon Beckett, the explorer, who brings tragedy into Nicole's life, dull Miss Symington and "The Bat," her pathetic little nephew, and a host of village folk, are splendidly drawn. How Nicole's cousin Barbara, the least likeable character in the book, goes back as mistress of Rutherford, and Mrs. Jackson returns to the suburban life she is happiest in, is part of the story, which owes much of its charm to the Scottish dialect and ends on a stronger, deeper and more beautiful note than "happy ever after."

BURNED EVIDENCE. By Mrs. Wilson Woodrow. 7s. 6d. (Putnam's.)

Mrs. Wilson Woodrow has added yet another victim to the interminable list of millionaires who are murdered in fiction, but she is excused. It is always satisfactory for millionaires to be murdered if what follows is as vivaciously fascinating as her book. The story begins with the usual rush of incident which has projected Mrs. Wilson Woodrow into the front rank of spell-binders. Jerome Fosdick is blackmailed by Madame Adelbron, a fake medium, and he promptly enlists the services of Anthony Wandridge, a rising young lawyer. An interview takes place between them, and the day after Fosdick is mysteriously done to death. To keep things at the necessary thrill point, this is quickly followed by a neatly executed burglary at his house when some papers relating to the attempted blackmail are stolen. Sara Fosdick, the charming daughter of the murdered millionaire, retains the services of Anthony Wandridge to watch her interests, but in the subsequent proceedings this young man's activities cover a much larger field. Suspicion points with an unerring finger in the direction of Madame Adelbron, for Mrs. Wilson Woodrow has made it sufficiently plain that this lady is not nice to know. The story however abounds in perplexities which are very skilfully hidden behind the undoubted guilt

of Madame Adelbron, and we are kept in an interrogative state of mind till the end. Mrs. Wilson Woodrow has an apt facility for witty illustration. Take this for example: "She was so well dressed that you never noticed her clothes."

THE HAPPY TREE. By Rosalind Murray. 7s. 6d. (Chatto & Windus.)

There is a note of quiet power running through this story by Rosalind Murray. The story is alive, and the people in it alive, though the theme of the tale is simple enough. As the heroine of the tale, Helen, eventually sums things up: "I was happy when I was a child, and I married the wrong person, and someone I loved dearly was killed in the war . . . that is all. And all those things must be true of thousands of people." Which of course is just what should make an instant appeal to readers—when such a theme is handled in the way Miss Murray handles it. It is a poignant story that will find an echo in many hearts.

The Bookman's Table.

FOOTNOTES. By Walter A. Mursell. 3s. 6d. (Gay & Hancock.)

"The Bishop's Boots" by this author has already proved a boon companion, one to turn to with confidence when the all-too-rare few minutes of relaxation comes along. In the same light-hearted, refreshing strain comes "Footnotes," the only difference being that instead of the many and varied subjects dealt with in the former, we have a straightforward account of a "pedestrian journey" in Northern Ireland. Dr. Mursell lays down three conditions for a successful tramp, viz.:—"travel light, take it easy, and choose as good companions as I had—if you can." He most certainly had the last, for a more congenial quartet could scarcely be wished for than "the Quarter Master, the Bard, the young Babe, and myself." No matter what the contingency, one of them was always ready to meet it and to extract from it all the diversion possible. Crossing the frontier into the Irish Free State gives cause for considerable trepidation: "I do not like . . . to have it tacitly assumed that I am an ingrained smuggler, concealing spirits about my person, hiding tobacco in my boots, and lining my lingerie with lace or silk." This difficulty however was overcome very glibly. One would like to quote many little lively passages, but the book is just one succession of them. Their hosts and hostesses, the interesting specimens they came across both human and archeological, the embarrassing dilemmas, the weather, state of the roads,

their physical shortcomings, not to mention the numerous ham-and-eggs and enticing drinks, are all handled with that easy charm the reading of which is a real tonic. A amusing little sketches of this droll party by Isobel H. Walker are dotted about the pages.



Dr. Walter Mursell,

Author of "Footnotes" (Gay & Hancock).

BY GEORGE BELCHER. 10s. 6d. (Alston Rivers.)

What better tonic could a doctor prescribe than liberal doses of George Belcher. Those readers who have appreciated this artist's drawings in *Punch* and the *Tatler* will revel in this handsomely arranged volume which is packed from start to finish with clever sketches and clean, choice wit. Not the least interesting feature is the fact that the caricatures, portraying cockney life at its very "cockneyist," are drawn from living models, and it is to these stalwarts of jocularity that Mr. Belcher has dedicated his book. Sometimes, too, delicious home-truths mingle freely with the ludicrous, as instanced in the picture of Mrs. Chigg talking to her landlord about a neighbour with whom she has not been on the friendliest of terms—"Well!" says Mrs. Chigg, "She do smile when I passes 'er now, but there beant much nourishment in it"! All kinds of folk will find a chord in their hearts which responds with whole-hearted delight and laughter to the witticisms and humour which sparkle on every page.

FIRST ESSAYS ON ADVERTISING. By J. Murray Allison. 10s. 6d. net. (Cecil Palmer.)

As the author points out, the bibliography of advertising is not yet very imposing, and an exploration of the subject from so great an expert was certainly required. The time is easily remembered when, by people of taste and discretion, a much advertised article was regarded as, *ipso facto*, vulgar and inferior. That attitude has pretty generally disappeared. Now we have Mr. Allison explaining the possibilities of the modern system of advertising as a panacea for many ills, such even as unemployment. There is more in the book of practical use to the advertiser than of reassurance to a public who pays attention to advertising. The chapter on posters, for example, will well repay reading by the artist who seeks to attract the fleeting attention of the passer-by; he must bear in mind that he is in competition with perhaps dozens of other posters on a large hoarding; and he must choose a method and even pigments which will clash as violently as possible with his rivals. The advertisement must not sink peacefully and tastefully into its surroundings; it must stick out and shout.

WHO'S WHO IN AMERICA. Edited by Albert Nelson Marquis. 17s. 6d. net. (London: Stanley Paul.)

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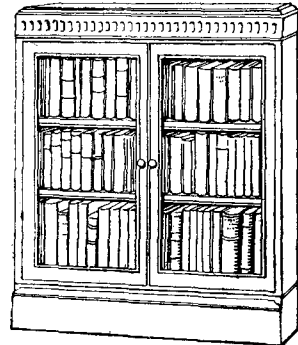
"Debrett's Peerage, Baronetage, Knightage and Companionage," edited by Arthur G. M. Hesilrige. 75s. (Dean & Son.)

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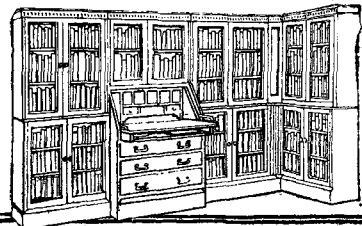
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This volume, handsomely produced in quarto size, yet light in the hand and admirably adapted for its purpose as a bed book, is made up of selections from Dr. Courtney's "Literary Man's Bible" and "Literary Man's New Testament." The aim of these earlier works, which have enjoyed considerable popularity, was to encourage readers to regard the Bible, not merely as a manual of devotion or theology, to be taken in small doses for edification, but as literature to be enjoyed for its own sake. The present volume is an anthology of passages from the Scriptures that, judged again from the literary point of view, are deemed most suitable for the tired brain seeking refreshment and solace before slumber. The book is divided into five sections—Historical, the Prophets, Poetic Section, Wisdom Literature, and the New Testament. Genesis, Ruth, Samuel and Kings contribute most to the Historical part; while among the prophets of course Isaiah comes easily first. The poetic section draws not only upon Psalms and the Song of Solomon, but includes many isolated and less familiar passages from the Old Testament. Selections from Proverbs, Ecclesiastes and Job supply the "Wisdom Literature," and the New Testament section is devoted mainly to the Gospels, the Acts and Revelation—the only possible ground for disagreement with Dr. Courtney

being the comparatively little space given to the Epistles. The book is furnished with a compact and illuminating introduction and is discriminatingly annotated; and the text has been arranged so that eye and brain are not, as in ordinary editions of the Bible, worried and impeded by the verse numerals.

THE BOOK OF REVELATION. With Dürer's Plates. 8s. 6d. (Philip Allan.)

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Music.

ROMANCE IN MUSIC.

BY RODNEY BENNETT.

The numerous articles which recently celebrated the centenary of Carl Maria von Weber's death contained, as one expected they would, the statement that he was the pioneer of romance in opera, that in "Der Freischütz" he broke away from the classical tradition. And so on and so on. Indeed no commentary upon him would be quite proper without it. I myself duly used it and went on to describe how the audience assembled on that historic first night in 1823—it included among other notabilities Heine and young Mendelssohn—acclaimed the opera as something rich and strange without quite knowing why, or at least all the reasons why. Of course as we centenarists properly pointed out, the story had something to do with it. Here positively was a German opera with a German story. Also, and we discussed this with some display of wisdom, there was the new orchestral colour: Weber combined his instruments in novel ways that stimulated vague but exciting ecstasies, and, what was more, did so consistently, at length and with purpose. So we talked about it and about; and all, so far as I saw, discreetly evaded the one thing that I for one would have given much to achieve: a useful definition of what "romantic" really means in its application to music.

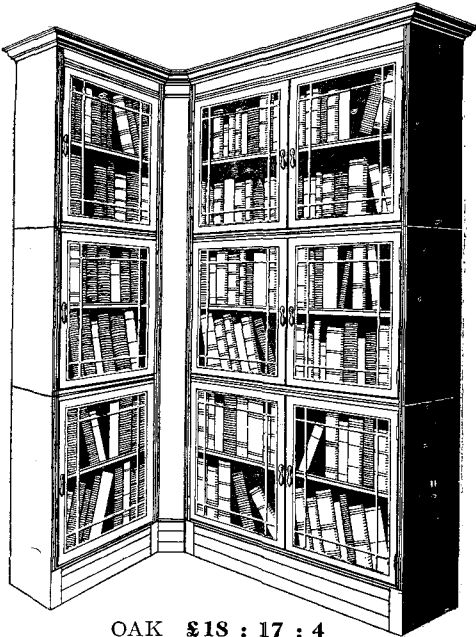
For romantic and classic are two of those words which, like minor poets talking of life and beauty, we bandy about with the greatest complacency until in moments of uncomfortably honest mental introspection we begin to wonder if we really have any clear conception of their meaning. Are they really so mutually exclusive as the historians would have us believe?

Inevitably, when the perennial comparison between classic and romantic arises, we concentrate upon the former, since it is the easier to handle, and sit comfortably back into the eighteenth century. There, we say, is an age of classicism, calm, restraint, discipline; an age when, instead of endangering their few sad last grey hairs by trying to find out what their author had meant to do, critics comfortably and unmetaphysically damned him by comparing his stuff with what others had done before him; an age when writers were not yet infected with that desire for originality nor with that hankering after just self-expression which are at once the essence and the bane of romance, but esteemed manner more than matter, and

were therefore content to wonder and explore but little, preferring form to colour, intellect to imagination, foreground to background and comfortable certainty to disturbing speculation. There are, for example, in literature Pope and in music Bach. Then there comes to mind the fact that, with a certain lack of consideration for the easy generaliser, Pope played with his dreams of Arcadia, and that on occasion, for example in the E♭ minor Prelude, Bach can be almost Chopinesque. They will not quite fit. Human nature is disconcertingly inconsistent.

Yet the century was preponderantly classical for all its inconsistency. It did largely fit into the classification just sketched out. After the ardours and endurances of Elizabethanism a reaction was bound to come. Mankind had accumulated so much treasure, mental and material, that it had to devote best part of two centuries to sorting it out, ordering it, philosophising about it, growing comfortably complacent about it, and becoming in the process so shortsighted and deficient in any sort of historical sense as to conclude that the height of human perfectability had now been reached, that the present was so obviously an advance upon the past as to make it the most natural thing in the world to regard the words Gothic and barbarous as synonyms. A plump time for little men and minor dogmatists, and no bad atmosphere either for the bigger men who ran rather to brain than spirit.

But the people who really mattered most do not, in spite of such general truth, fit in very well. Temperament and personality are tricky customers that will not, for all the historians, tuck themselves compactly into watertight compartments labelled "trends" and "tendencies," and draw in their coat-tails to accommodate the lid. Even small men bobbed out with surprising frequency. Shenstone, who was surely small enough fry to have known better, must needs perk up with a quite charming fragment of romance called "The Schoolmistress," and Gay counter "The Beggar's Opera" with "Trivia" and artificial pastoral with the almost gross realism of his "Shepherd's Week." Some men, it would seem, are born classics—or romantics, if you are arguing that way—some achieve classicism, and some have classicism thrust upon them. Gray is an excellent example of a man who achieves the romantic attitude in defiance of all the apparent



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probabilities. If ever there was an orderly, unadventurous soul who ought to have stayed in his university cloister and produced polite aridities in heroic couplets, or absurdities like his friend Mason's, it was surely Gray; yet, not content with his "Elegy," he must needs go pioneering among eddas, sagas and forgotten languages like a viking in a neat little tie-wig and knee-shorts. Coleridge and Blake would have been romantics whenever they lived; but one has a suspicion that, had Wordsworth been born in 1720, he might well have died a confirmed classicist, and a dryish one at that, with an entirely unsuspected seed of romance lying unfertilised in his heart.

Fortunately history accomplished that fertilisation, as it fertilised the seed of romance throughout Germany. History had notably done the same thing once before in comparatively modern times, when the discovery of an old new world of forgotten lore and learning, and of that new world called America, swept back curtains of ancient darkness from "magic casements, opening on the foam of perilous seas." Now again, towards the end of the eighteenth century, the disturbance occasioned by the French Revolution and the Napoleonic Wars produced obvious and well recognised effects upon the literature and music of Germany. Seeing homes, dynasties, cultures and the security of material treasures crumbling about them, and despairing of the present, men turned their eyes, as the oppressed always will, to Utopias of the future on the one hand and, on the other, to the recollection of "old, unhappy, far-off things and battles long ago." Their art tended, as the art of the oppressed always will, to romance, because it averted its eyes from the present.

But it would be wrong to suppose that the change from classicism to romance would not have come but for the Napoleonic Wars. Though possibly with less suddenness and momentum, the pendulum would still have swung, for the very simple reason that the swing was due. The history of art, as of style in clothes, is one

of reactions, revulsions, reversions. Fashion destroys itself. Eventually with that fickleness which is the main-spring of change, we loathe what we did love. Listeners were tired of logic just as the spiritually-minded were tired of the substitution of theology for religion, and turned from it with an indiscriminating revulsion which sent even so great a logician as Bach into an oblivion from which he is not even yet entirely withdrawn. Only Handel preserved his lustre by reason of the fact that he appeals to the dramatically religious as well as to the musical sense.

In literature the most popular form was the quasi-historical romance. Castles were at a premium, at least in fiction, particularly if they included a ghost, a clanking chain and a perambulating scream. Weber refers with gusto to the gloomy pile in which he was writing his "Lyre and Sword" cycle. Horace Walpole, of all people, turned Strawberry Hill into a rather comic rococo castle and wrote a still more comic shocker in "The Castle of Otranto," beside a number of ghostly stories which still remain in his minute handwriting in the British Museum. Soon from a hundred presses came a stream of translated romances, ballads, forgeries and incredible imitations of Kotzebue of the sort ridiculed by Sheridan in "The Critic" and by Canning in the amusing pages of the "Anti-Jacobin." Mrs. Radcliffe thrilled the nation with her "Mysteries of Udolpho," and Mat Lewis, with whom young Scott was thrilled to dine, won the nickname of Monk, and a reputation quite beyond his literary merit, with work of the sort that Jane Austen was to parody so deliciously in "Northanger Abbey."

Many of the literary and musical manifestations of the new spirit now seem comic and ridiculous, yet they were a sign of the time, of its interests and of its disproportions. Awe and wonder had returned to literature; and music, going more closely hand in hand with literature than is its wont, gave the most vivid expression to the new spirit

that we now call Romance, the spirit of adventure, unrest and questioning.

Who is the perfect classicist in music, who the perfect romantic? Bach, as has already been pointed out, though his name would leap to most tongues in haphazard discussion, will serve only with qualification. Mozart? One hesitates and objects to classify him, yet he is perhaps as near as we shall get. He moves with superb detachment, as do his operatic characters, in a world which he has created for himself somewhere between two remote stars. It may be objected that his "Magic Flute" has a subject ideally suited to romance. It has; but it is even more perfectly adapted to classical treatment, for its very inconsequence frees the composer, if he be so minded, from any necessity to contemplate external and tangible reality. Subject decides nothing: romance or the reverse is in the composer's attitude to his subject and in the treatment resulting from that attitude. Mozart's detachment marks him as classic of the classic. He epitomises the Olympian serene. He asks nothing, doubts nothing, explains nothing. As Ernest Newman, with his gift for the clarifying phrase, has put it, his music casts no shadows. In its unruffled certainty it is the antithesis of that troubled yearning for the unattainable and inexpressible which informs romantic art.

But this search for the perfect example, even if it yielded any entirely satisfying result, would be really unnecessary. The least instructed listener, provided he be naturally sensitive, feels, though he may not be able to express, the difference. Listening to the dark beauty of Beethoven, to the restless brilliance of Weber, to the almost fevered magniloquence of Wagner, we no longer feel, as with Bach, Handel and Mozart, that here are musicians serenely sure, content simply to express their conceptions by weaving sounds into patterns of proportioned loveliness. Colour, which formerly appeared apparently unsought, is now a primary consideration, and is often used so enchantingly as for the moment at least to disguise the form of what it adorns. Almost the part seems more important than the whole, the means more than the end. That is the antithesis of the classical ideal, which is based upon subordination. From a classical composition, as from Renaissance architecture, one carries away a clear impression of a balanced whole; from a romantic symphony, as from a Gothic cathedral, something widely different. The mind is filled with conflicting emotions, exquisite details, still more exquisite and grandiose suggestions. If we could for a moment slip back, we feel, and catch it all at rest, we might grasp its scheme of things entire. But we should not. That is not the way of romance. Always it entices and eludes, asks but will not answer. The end of the road is always just beyond the ever-receding horizon, and the answer over the rim of the moon.

THE AUTHENTIC TOUCH IN MUSIC.

There is the authentic touch in music as in literature, although somewhat differently expressed. Individuality in the work of an author—apart from what is revealed of his mental processes and emotions—may exist as often as not in his arrangement of sentences or phrases as much as in his choice of words, whereas the authentic touch of

a composer is shown more often in some little turn of melody, or a fondness for a particular chord or chords (comparable to a choice of words) rather than in the distinctiveness of more extended constructive details—comparable to an arrangement of words and phrases. Rhythmic incidence is of course a trait of individuality common to both arts.

Despite the hand of the arranger a good deal of the authentic "Elgarisms" claim recognition in "Edward Elgar's Song Melodies," arranged for pianoforte by Ernest Austin. In "Like to the Damask Rose" the ascending octaves for left hand remind one of a similar device in the second of his Four Songs from "The Fringes of the Fleet." "Queen Mary's Song" is undeniably from the same mind and hand that wrote "Salut d'Amour," while "The Shepherd's Song" is more than a little reminiscent of the "Enigma Variations," and is thus incidentally in the composer's best vein, although constructively a slight touch. The collection of seven compositions is one that lovers of Elgar's music will enjoy, since it is representative of the various facets of his (musical) individuality.

I was interested in a book of "Ten Little Pieces without Titles" for piano, by Clement M. Spurling, because although quite slight constructively and conceptually, they too bear unmistakable evidence of an authentic touch, if an entirely unfamiliar one. The composer plainly loathes commonplace harmony and harmonic figures, whilst yet desiring to write in a manner that shall neither be incomprehensible nor difficult for players of quite modest abilities. The result is that we encounter some fresh-sounding chords in modulatory passages, and an absence of tum-tummy accompaniment figures that has all the charm of the spontaneous. In No. 9—actually a miniature *capriccioso*—we find these characteristics in marked degree; it is a charming trifle. Even in the little "beginner's" waltz that constitutes No. 3 there is the authentic touch of the composer. The pieces are suitable for the elementary player. I wish I could write something encouraging about the "Five Sketches for Piano," by F. Percival Driver, because there is much work in them, and it is evident that their composer has tried so hard to imbue them with an original touch. Indeed I feel he has tried too hard; they are of the head too purely to smack of an inner self; yet they are tuneful enough. A collection of eight little duets for piano, "Tunes for Two Players," by E. Markham Lee, do not I imagine aspire to be more than teaching material for small children and should be eminently useful in that way. All the above publications are from the International Music Company, Ltd.

From Enochs I have an arrangement for piano duet of the fifth valse (*Op.* 109) of Mme. Chaminade, "Valse Militaire," which forms a brilliant piece for two capable pianists to play, and calls for a nice appreciation of rhythm and a fluent finger technique for its smooth performance. These publishers also send a "Second Adult Album" of moderately easy and moderately difficult pieces for pianoforte, collected, phrased and edited, with analytical notes, by Gertrude Azulay. I have not come across a more helpful book, full of useful hints in matters of phrasing, pedal and keyboard technique and interpretation for the student who can play fairly well and is for some reason compelled temporarily to be without a good teacher.

WATSON LYLE.

The Drama.

A CAMBRIDGE LEAD IN THEATRE-CRAFT.

BY HENRY C. SHELLEY.

Oxford's supremacy over Cambridge in the matter of possessing a repertory theatre is ended. The historic Barnwell Theatre, believed to be the only surviving example of a Regency playhouse, has been drastically reconstructed in its auditorium, equipped with the most modern lighting

system, fitted with a flexible stage, and reopened as the Festival Theatre.

This is not a commercial enterprise, but represents on the part of its founder and director, Mr. Terence Gray, an attempt to provide a playhouse in which the art of the



Mask of Apollo,
used in the production of "Oresteia."

theatre can be seriously practised. A graduate of Cambridge, Mr. Gray has devoted much study to modern theatre-craft, and holds pronounced views as to the present condition of the English stage. He is convinced that "among the forty odd theatres in the West of London there is not one in which the art of the theatre is seriously practised." In the main he attributes this to what he describes as "the curse of the London County Council." What he means by that indictment is that, owing to the subjugation of the theatre to a system of licensing regulations which had its origin under conditions which have become obsolete so far as constructional and lighting requirements are concerned, it is impossible to build such a stage or provide such a system of lighting as true theatre craft demands.

Holding that it is the business of the producer of plays to enlarge the scope of dramatic expression by every possible means, he believes that that end may be achieved not merely by the elocution and gesture of the player, but also by his position in relation to other players, by the architecture of the scene in which he moves, by his clothing and the properties which constitute the scene, and by the lighting of the player in harmony with the changing mood to which he gives expression.

Such are some of the ideals which are to be pursued at the Festival Theatre. To that end, the stage is threefold in construction, embracing a fore-stage which merges down into the auditorium; a middle-stage with a turntable by which various aspects of architectural scenery may be brought into view; and a back-stage which can be moved forward as occasion dictates. At the rear, and in place



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of the usual back-cloth, is a semicircular cyclorama, which is a solid structure faced with a white surface on which can be projected the varied lighting of the latest installation of the Schwabe system.

Although the opening performance of the "Oresteia" of Æschylus did not permit an exploitation of the full range of the theatre's unique equipment, it was obvious that the method favoured by Mr. Gray is its own justification in heightening the archaic qualities of such an early example of dramatic art. Remembering the primitive nature of that famous trilogy, the presentation had been conceived and carried out not along the realistic or romantic lines usually adopted, but in an abstract, expressionistic spirit. The appeal was to the intelligence by stylistic methods. The translation selected—that by Mr. R. C. Trevelyan (published by Hodder & Stoughton for the University of Liverpool Press)—was favoured because it is an attempt to imitate the metrical phrasing and pattern of the original. The same principle had guided the designing of the masks; the work conjointly of Mr. W. Hampton and the Misses Daphne and Phyllis Jerrold, the great-granddaughters of Douglas Jerrold. There was nothing of the Greek quality about these masks. As the representative examples will show, they were intended to portray the outstanding traits of the characters depicted—the majesty of Agamemnon, the craft of Clytemnestra, the furious wrath of the Furies. And the grouping and movements of the Chorus and the Trojan Bondwomen and the Furies, designed and directed by Miss Ninette de Valois, the gifted dancer of the Russian Ballet and the Beecham and Royal Italian Opera Companies, were dramatically effective in bringing out the changing moods of the trilogy. In its total effect, the performance vividly portrayed how Greek religion was not of the moral emotions only but of the whole gamut of humanity. The three phases of Oresteian legend moved before the audience as a stately processional bas-relief. Memory was busy with the words:

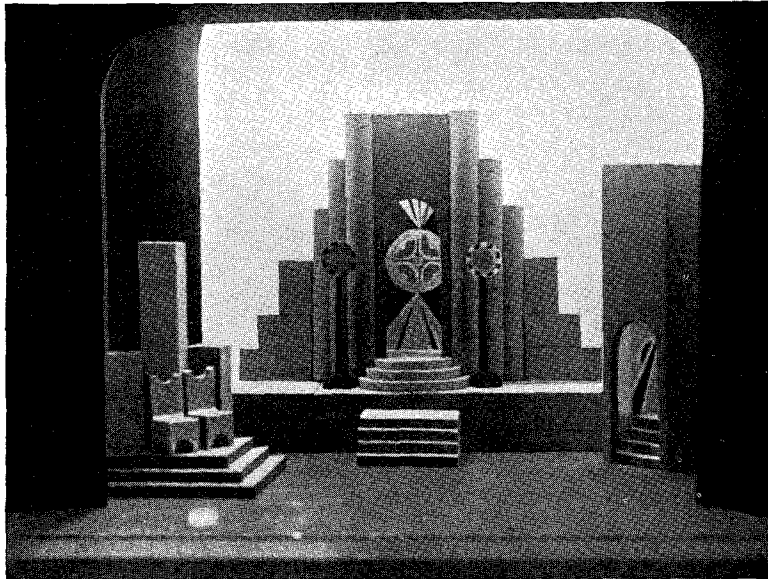
"O Attic shape! Fair attitude! with brede
Of marble men and maidens overwrought."

But it is not merely the dawn of dramatic art which will engage the directors of the Festival Theatre. Such modern parables as Mr. W. J. Turner's "The Man who Ate the Popomack," such historical dramas as the "Heraclius" of T. E. Ellis, such sagas as "The Immortal Hour" are on the list of plays set down for early performance. The policy of the theatre is to "produce the greatest plays of all ages and all countries irrespective of fashions, prejudices and literary preconceptions." Thus as a brave adventure to redress the balance and supply the deficiencies of the commercial theatre, Mr. Terence Gray's experiment will not merely be watched with deep interest, but should command the enthusiastic support of all who are interested in the use of the drama for the enrichment of the nation's intellectual life.

FILMS OF WAR.*

There was a time when the war-film became, to the

* "Mons," at the Shepherd's Bush Pavilion; "Mademoiselle from Armentières," at the Marble Arch Pavilion; "Beau Geste," at the Plaza. And elsewhere.



Festival Theatre Setting for "The Immortal Hour."

average thinking man, an offence and abomination. Propaganda o'erleaped itself; and for some years beyond the armistice, the war-tale remained unmarketable. Now it comes back, but with a difference. You may say "Mons" is propaganda: so it is, in the sense that all great epics have been the propaganda of manliness since the world started. Here are no artificially heightened villainies and heroisms—above all, no stage-managed "atrocities"—but

the plain tale of Autumn, 1914, of duty simply and greatly done; a tale which stirs the blood by its epic grandeur without meretricious or sentimental aids. As in the Ypres film, many actual events are reconstructed; and although no combination of the historic and the imaginary can ever be quite satisfactory (a point to which we may return by and by) at least the imaginary episodes are generally in key with the rest.

In points of detail, certain criticisms suggest themselves. One or two incidents are badly staged (thus, in the single combat by the mill pool, the men are too near). More generally the film is realistic in patches—e.g. in the "boots" episode, with its suggestion of the bitter weariness of a forced march—while elsewhere it falls short of realism, as it was bound to do: in noise, in smells, in the effect of shell-fire. One critic finds it "ludicrous" that shells should be seen to burst without visible consequences; it is not "ludicrous"—the theme is too big for that: and there is such a thing as imagination, even in the picture house—but it is certainly not realistic. In brief, the story is not always kept to one plane and suffers artistically (though not historically) in consequence.

Artistically indeed, the whole thing falls far short of "Mademoiselle from Armentières." Where all is frankly fictional, the mind is no longer confused by trying to separate the false from the true. And here an old maxim of aesthetics crops up—namely that fiction may be much more like reality than the most faithful record of reality itself. "Truth stranger than fiction" is the conventional expression of this; "truth less convincing than fiction" is what every artist knows. And "Mademoiselle," all bunkum and make-believe, yet gives a remarkably faithful "atmosphere" of the B.E.F.: more so in my opinion, for the reasons suggested above, than the other film. Technically a point worth noting is the use of music in place of captions—old snatches known to everyone, such as "Another little drink," "Old soldiers never die," and so forth; Mr. Maurice Elvey, the director, had a unique chance here, and has used it admirably. And if Mademoiselle's access to the firing line is a little incredible, at least her story is as free from sentimentality and from catchpenny "atrocities" as the Mons film itself.

"Beau Geste," a tale of war and comradeship in the Foreign Legion, is good: though less good than its press notices, and certainly not in the same class with "Mademoiselle." It suffers from a curiously sombre style of photography, and from the usual American policy of tempering narrative-subtlety to the most stupid spectator imaginable. Worth seeing, none the less, if only for its superiority to the average.

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